MASSACRE ARC

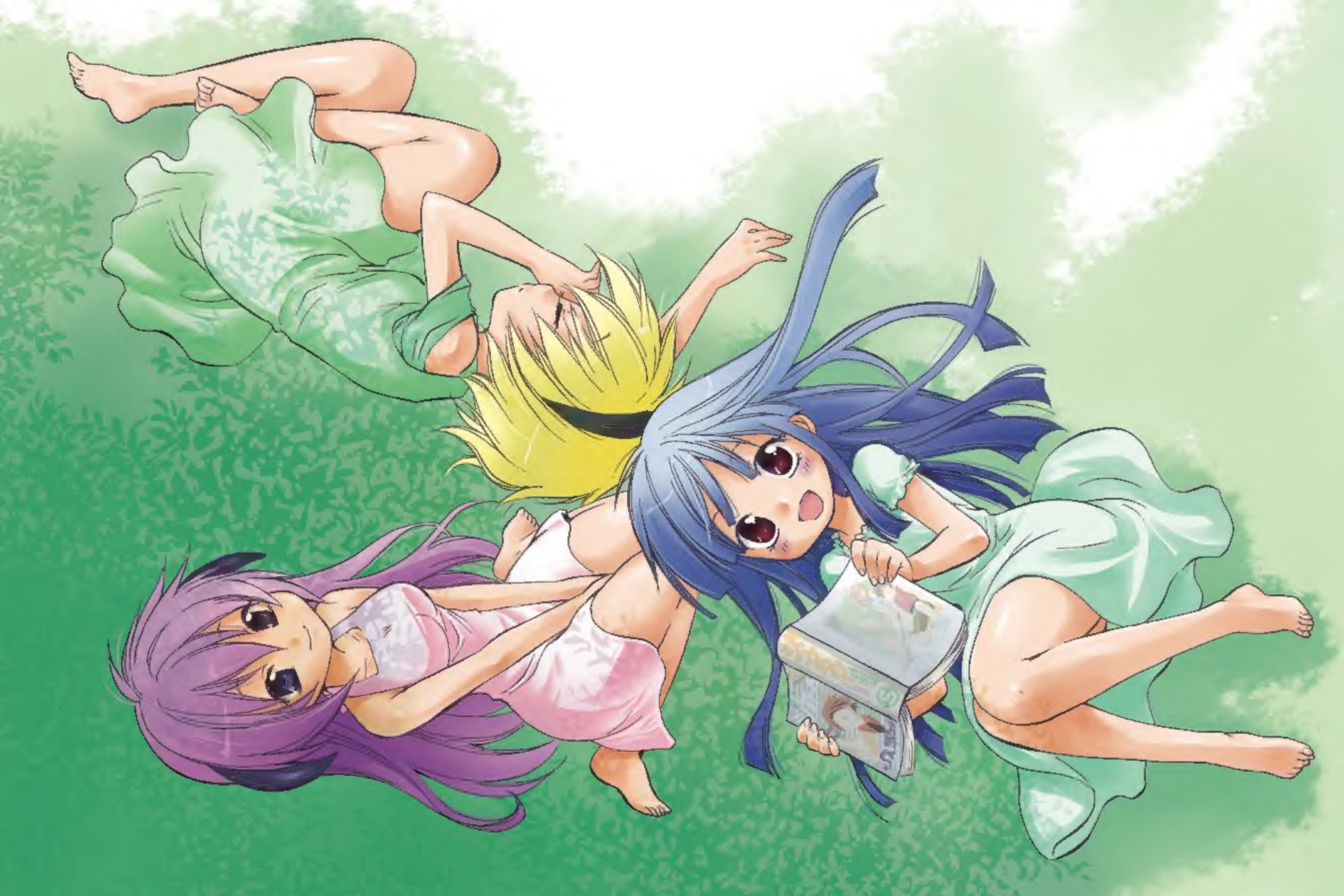
3

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY

STORY BY
RYUKISHI07

ART BY
HINASE MOMOYAMA

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY
MASSACRE ARC



Higurashi WHEN THEY CRY MASSACRE ARC 3

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入江診療所

SIGN: IRIE CLINIC

ON THE NIGHT OF THE FIFTH COTTON DRIFTING...

...OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE...

CHAPTER 18: COMMENCE OPERATIONS

BI (FWIP)

WE WILL NOW BEGIN OPERATION: APOCALYPSE.

DON'T TAKE YOUR EYES OFF OF DR. IRIE.

OKONOGI, WAIT UNTIL I CALL YOU.

ZA (ZSH)

I'LL HANDLE THINGS HERE.

DRIVE SAFELY.

KUSU (GIGGLE)

WELL...

BATAN (SLAM)

...I'M OFF TO DIE.

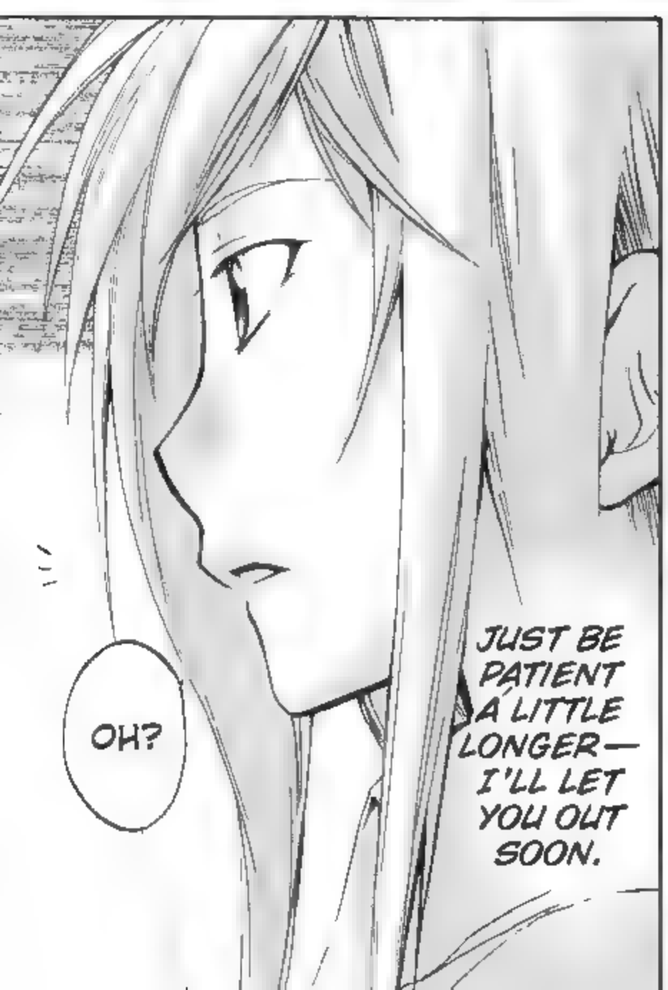
RIII (CHIRP)

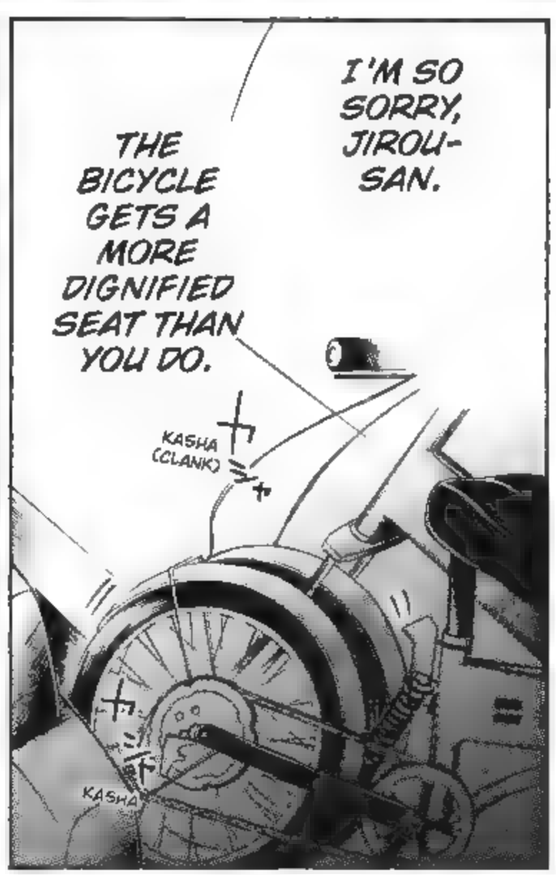
RIII

...

サワ SAWA (BURBLE)

サワ SAWA


OH?
JUST BE PATIENT A LITTLE LONGER— I'LL LET YOU OUT SOON.


I'M SO SORRY, JIROU-SAN.
THE BICYCLE GETS A MORE DIGNIFIED SEAT THAN YOU DO.
KASHA (CLANK)
KASHA

BURORO (VRRROOM)
KUSU (CHUCKLE)
KUSU

WHAT ARE THE POLICE DOING OUT HERE...?

OH...THEY MUST BE ON THE LOOKOUT IN CASE OF A FIFTH INCIDENT.

HEE-HEE. THEY WOULD NEVER DREAM THAT THIS YEAR'S CURSE VICTIM IS RIDING IN THIS CAR RIGHT NOW.

ぎゃい

GYAI (TURN)

GLIIIN (VRRRM)

KIK SCREE

THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN AN EXCELLENT PLACE TO TAKE CARE OF THIS.

BUT OH WELL. THIS PLACE WILL WORK TOO.

I ENJOYED YOUR AWKWARD EXPRESSIONS OF LOVE.

GOOD-BYE, JIROU-SAN.

GACHA (KACHAK)

I WISH I COULD HAVE HEARD MORE OF THEM. IT'S REALLY TOO BAD.

DOSA (THUD)

...AND REACH THE FINAL STAGES OF LEVEL FIVE.

BUT SOON YOU WILL WAKE UP...

IT'S QUITE THE HONOR, YOU KNOW.

AND YOU GET TO BE ITS CORNER-STONE.

OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE WILL GAIN A STRONGER FOUNDA-TION.

...WILL BE ETCHED IN HINAMI-ZAWA HISTORY AS THE FIFTH YEAR'S CURSE.

YOUR ABNOR-MAL DEATH AND MY DISAP-PEAR-ANCE...

YOU WILL ABANDON YOUR MORTAL FLESH...

...AND BECOME A PART OF SOMETHING ETERNAL.

BUROROVRRROOM

キキッ
KIKI
(SCREE)

PA
FLASH

HELLO. I'M TAKANO.
THE PAPER-WORK IS IN THE TRUNK.
GACHA KACHAK
GO ON INTO THE COMMAND VEHICLE.
COPY, HQ. WE HAVE IDENTIFIED THE BABY BIRD.

THANKS FOR COMING ...

...MAJOR TAKANO.

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

AND HOW IS MY CORPSE DOING?

KA (FLASH)

KACHA (CLINK)

HAVE SOME COFFEE.

THANK YOU.

I SEE.

WE HAVE A REPORT FROM GIFU THAT THE COUNTER-FEIT IS READY.

...AND BROUGHT EIGHTEEN HIGHLY CLASSIFIED FILES WITH ME.

THAT WAS EASY. I MADE MY— "TAKANO'S"— ESCAPE FROM HINAMIZAWA...

OPERA-TION: APOCA-LYPSE.

THAT IS THE NAME OF THIS MISSION.

NOW WE CAN CARRY OUT OPERATION: APOCALYPSE WITHOUT A HITCH.

UNHAPPY WITH BUDGET CUTS AND FORCED TO END THEIR STUDIES...

...THE EXECUTIVES AT THE IRIE INSTITUTE DEMANDED THAT THE RESEARCH BE SOLD OFF.

THEN TOMITAKE, THE LIAISON FROM TOKYO, IS KILLED.

HIS UNUSUAL DEATH WILL DIRECT TOKYO'S SUSPICIONS TOWARD THE IRIE INSTITUTE.

IT WILL LOOK AS IF THE IRIE INSTITUTE HAS GONE ROGUE, AND OUR OPERATION WILL BE A SUCCESS.

AND ALL THAT WILL LEAD TO...

EVEN MORE SO IF I, THE INSPECTOR, DIE AS WELL.

THE TEAM IN GIFU SEEMS TO HAVE RUN INTO A PROBLEM.

SU (SSK)

MAJOR! I'M TERRIBLY SORRY.

THERE WAS A MISTAKE IN THE SELECTION OF YOUR FALSE BODY. IT'S BEEN DEAD FOR TWENTY-FOUR HOURS.

A PROB-LEM? WHAT HAP-PENED?

...IT WILL LOOK LIKE YOU WERE ALREADY DEAD AS OF YESTERDAY.

THAT MEANS ...

THAT'S ALL RIGHT.

GO AHEAD AND LET THAT BE MY CORPSE.

KUSU KUSU (CHUCKLE)

くすくす

HUH ...?

BUT THAT WOULD CONTRA-DICT THE EVIDENCE THAT YOU WENT TO THE COTTON DRIFTING FESTIVAL LAST NIGHT...

THE MESSENGER OF OYASHIRO-SAMA, SENT TO LEAD HINAMIZAWA TO DESTRUC-TION, HAD ACTUALLY DIED THE DAY BEFORE...

...AND WAS WALKING AROUND THE FESTIVAL AS A LIVING CORPSE.

SIGN: CANDIED FRUIT

HEH HEH HEH

WOULDN'T THAT BE INTERESTING?

SO TELL ME, HOW DID I DIE?

.....

YES, MA'AM.

YOU WERE FOUND BURNED TO DEATH IN THE MOUN-TAINS.

AND YOU, TAKANO, WILL BE BURNED TO DEATH SOMEWHERE DEEP IN THE MOUNTAINS.

NO, OF COURSE NOT.

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

くすくす

KUSU

KUSU

KUSU

THE APOCA-LYPSE IS COMING ANYWAY.

CALL THE WILD DOGS IN HINAMIZAWA AND TELL THEM TO MONITOR TARGET R MORE CLOSELY.

YES, MA'AM.

SO, MAJOR... THERE IS NO PROBLEM WITH THE BODY?

I SEE.

THERE REALLY IS SOME-THING ABOUT THAT GIRL THAT SUR-PASSES HUMAN UNDER-STAND-ING.

SO IT ISN'T FOR NOTHING THAT THEY CALL HER THE REINCAR-NATION OF OYASHIRO-SAMA.

BEFORE ANYONE EVEN REALIZES IT, ALL WILL BE DE-STROYED!

HEE HEE HEE!

LET THEM QUESTION ONE PERSON'S TIME OF DEATH!

...I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

WHAT A WAY TO GO.

DIED CLAWING OUT HIS OWN THROAT.

I'D BET TEN TO ONE IT'S SOME KIND OF SHADY DRUG.

WHAT ON EARTH IS GOING ON HERE?

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT MYSELF.

HMMM.

A DRUG... YOU SAY?

...AND THE BRUISES ON THE VICTIM'S BODY...

FROM THIS PIECE OF LUMBER ...

...IS THAT HE WAS ATTACKED ON HIS WAY BACK TO OKINOMIYA AFTER THE FESTIVAL.

...THE MOST LIKELY SCENARIO ...

THEN HE LOST HIS MIND AND ENDED UP DEAD. ...OR SOMETHING ALONG THOSE LINES.

THEY HELD HIM DOWN AND INJECTED HIM WITH SOMETHING.

NO.

THIS WAS CAUSED BY THE FINAL STAGES OF HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME!

THAT'S WHY HE WOULD HAVE BEEN WAVING THAT PIECE OF LUMBER.

THE EXAGGERATED PERSECUTION COMPLEX THAT ACCOMPANIES LEVEL FIVE MADE HIM SEE ATTACKERS THAT WEREN'T THERE.

TOMITAKE-SAN WAS TAKING PREVENTIVE MEDICINE. HE CAN'T POSSIBLY HAVE CONTRACTED THE DISEASE!

BUT WHY!?

ALL I CAN THINK OF...

...IS THAT FOR [SOME] EVIL PURPOSE SOMEONE GAVE TOMITAKE-SAN A CONCENTRATED PATHOGEN THAT IMMEDIATELY INDUCED A LEVEL FIVE INFECTION.

IT WOULD BE POWERFUL ENOUGH TO CAUSE AN ACUTE ATTACK, DRIVE THE VICTIM MAD...

...AND EVENTUALLY LEAD TO HIS DEATH.

H173!?

NO!

HA (GASP)

THAT VILEST OF ALL KILLER DRUGS—WE DESTROYED IT ALL BACK WHEN WE CHANGED THE DIRECTION OF OUR RESEARCH.

IT CAN'T BE.

BE-SIDES ...

...TOMITAKE-SAN IS OUR LIAISON FROM TOKYO.

DID THEY GO AFTER HIM BECAUSE HE'S OUR TOKYO LIAISON...?

...THEN WHOEVER KILLED HIM PROBABLY KNEW EXACTLY WHO HE WAS AND WHAT HE WAS DOING HERE.

IF THIS IS HOW HE DIED...

TAKANO-SAN WAS SENT HERE FROM TOKYO TOO!

OH NO! WHAT ABOUT TAKANO-SAN!?

BA (FWP)

OOISHI-SAN!

ARE THEY AFTER HER TOO?

THE WOMAN WHO WAS WITH TOMITAKE DURING THE FESTIVAL— MIYO TAKANO! SHE'S GONE MISSING!

NO ...!

KUMA-CHAN!

I NEED YOU TO FIND OUT IF THEY'VE FOUND ANY UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE CORPSES TONIGHT!

YES, SIR!

IT MIGHT HAVE HAPPENED OUTSIDE OF THE PREFECTURE, SO CONFIRM IN NEIGH-BORING AREAS AS WELL!

...WHAT ON EARTH...

...IS GOING ON HERE...?

MIIIN (BUZZZZ)

MIN

MIN

THE NEXT DAY

FURUDE-SAN.

THERE'S SOMEONE TO SEE YOU AT THE SCHOOL ENTRANCE.

SOME-ONE TO SEE ME?

HELLO THERE.

SORRY FOR CALLING YOU OUT HERE LIKE THIS.

...OOISHI...!

TOMI-TAKE IS DEAD!?

YES.

WE SUSPECT IT WAS SOME KIND OF DRUG.

IT WAS A VERY STRANGE DEATH—HE SCRATCHED OUT HIS OWN THROAT.

GIRI (GRIT)

SO I REALLY CAN'T FIGHT IT...?

NO...

THEY FOUND HER BURNED CORPSE IN THE MOUNTAINS IN GIFU.

WHAT ABOUT TAKANO ...?

THEY BOTH DIED EXACTLY THE WAY YOU SAID THEY WOULD.

ちろ
CHIRO SOUNDS

BUT THERE IS ONE THING I FIND SUSPI-CIOUS.

ARE YOU ACCUSING ME, OOISHI, SIR?

NO, NO, I WOULD NEVER.

.....!

SIGN: YAKISOBA

...IN THE MIDST OF A CROWD WHERE ANYONE COULD OVERHEAR THEM.

NO ONE WOULD TALK ABOUT SOMETHING SO INCRIMINATING...

IT CAN'T BE.

DOES HE THINK I'M THE CULPRIT BECAUSE I MADE UP THAT STORY?

THEN ARE YOU SAYING I'M AN ACCOMPLICE IN SOME KIND OF CONSPIRACY ...?

SU (SSK)

IF SO, THEN THIS IS GOING TO BE— DIFFICULT...

...I WOULD LOVE TO BELIEVE THAT, BUT I JUST CAN'T DO IT.

4+y

CHAR! (JINGLE).

WHEN

I'M GLAD YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TREAT ME LIKE A CRIMINAL, SIR.

BESIDES ...

...WE STATIONED A PATROL CAR AT THE PLACE YOU FORE-TOLD, LITTLE PRIESTESS...

JAR! (CRUNCH)

IF YOU WERE AN ACCOM-PLICE, YOU WOULDN'T HAVE TOLD ME ABOUT THE PLOT.

SO AT THE VERY LEAST, I BELIEVE THAT YOU STAND AGAINST THE REAL KILLER.

...BUT THE BODY WAS FOUND ...

...MUCH CLOSER TO OKINOMIYA, ON THE BUND OF A RICE PADDY.

OKINOMIYA

BODY

BICYCLE

PATROL CAR

HINAMIZAWA

EH?

BUT IN THIS WORLD HE WAS FOUND SOME-WHERE ELSE...!?

WHY?

TOMITAKE'S BODY HAS BEEN FOUND IN THE SAME PLACE IN EVERY OTHER WORLD.

AND THEY TELL ME THAT TAKANO'S CAR WAS SEEN GOING TO OKINOMIYA ...

I HAD MY MEN CHECK EVERY CAR THAT PASSED BY.

...WITH ONLY TAKANO INSIDE IT.

HER BOYFRIEND, TOMITAKE, WAS NOT IN THE CAR.

BUT TOMITAKE WASN'T WITH HER.

THEN WOULDN'T HE HAVE PUT HIS BICYCLE IN THE TRUNK AND GOTTEN A RIDE? THEY WERE LOVERS, AFTER ALL.

THAT'S BECAUSE TOMITAKE ALWAYS COMES TO HINAMIZAWA ON HIS BICYCLE.

WHAT IS HE TRYING TO SAY?

AND YET, TOMITAKE'S BODY WAS FOUND PAST THE PATROL CAR.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT'S ODD?

...OH!

GIVEN HOW DARK THAT FOREST IS, SOMEONE ON A BICYCLE WOULDN'T HAVE TRIED TO GO AROUND THE PATROL CAR.

RATHER, THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN NO NEED TO GO AROUND IT!

HE'S RIGHT ...

IT'S RUDE OF ME TO SAY SO, BUT I THINK TAKANO WAS TOO MUCH FOR TOMITAKE TO HANDLE.

I DON'T REALLY KNOW, SIR.

FURUDE-SAN... DON'T YOU THINK THEY WERE A BIT... MISMATCHED AS A COUPLE?

!

AND SO...

...IT MAKES MORE SENSE TO ME TO SUSPECT THAT TAKANO GOT CLOSE TO TOMITAKE SO THAT SHE COULD USE HIM.

ZUM ZOOM

SHE WANTED TO TOSS THE BODY IN THE DARK FOREST ...

...BUT OUR LITTLE ORACLE'S PATROL CAR HAPPENED TO BE RIGHT THERE...

MY THEORY IS TOMITAKE WAS STUFFED IN HER TRUNK.

SO SHE HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO KEEP GOING...

...AND GET RID OF TOMITAKE SOMEWHERE FARTHER ON.

IF I HADN'T HEARD YOUR DIVINE MESSAGE...

...I WOULD PROBABLY HAVE ASSUMED THAT THEY HAD BOTH FALLEN VICTIM TO OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE.

BUT THAT'S NOT WHAT HAPPENED.

WHILE MAKING IT LOOK LIKE THE FIFTH YEAR'S CURSE...

...TAKANO KILLED TOMITAKE.

DOKUN THUMP

ドクン

I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

DOKUN

DOKUN

THAT'S RIDICU-LOUS...

DOKUN

TAKANO IS BEHIND THE FIFTH YEAR'S CURSE!?

DOKUN

BUT TAKANO WAS KILLED TOO, SIR!

YES, ABOUT THAT. THE TIME OF DEATH PRONOUNCED BY THE GIFU PREFECTURAL POLICE AUTOPSY DOESN'T ADD UP.

?

WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SIR?

I MEAN SHE WAS ALREADY DEAD THE NIGHT BEFORE THE FESTIVAL.

!!?

BUT IF YOU ASSUME THAT TAKANO MIGHT BE THE KILLER AND LOOK AT IT FROM THAT ANGLE...

...YOU SEE THAT MAYBE THAT BURNT CORPSE ISN'T TAKANO AT ALL.

SIGN: CANDIED FRUIT

BUT TAKANO WAS AT THE FESTIVAL.

THEY DECIDED SOMETHING WAS DONE IN ERROR AND STRUCK THAT PART OF THE AUTOPSY FROM THE RECORD.

NO...

I THOUGHT I NEEDED TAKANO'S HELP IN ORDER TO CHANGE MY DESTINY...

...AND I WORKED DESPERATELY TO GET HER ON MY SIDE...

...TAKANO...

...IS STILL ALIVE!?

...AS MIYO TAKANO'S WERE SWITCHED WITH FAKE RECORDS!

MAYBE THE DENTAL RECORDS THE MEDICAL EXAMINER USED TO IDENTIFY THE BODY...

SO HE'S SAYING...

KANA

KANA

KANA

KANA

KANA

KANA (CHIRP)

HAVE I BEEN DEPENDING ON THE WRONG PERSON ALL THIS TIME?

I HAVE TO KNOW THE TRUTH! IS TAKANO REALLY STILL ALIVE!?

SOME-BODY HERE MIGHT KNOW MORE ABOUT IT.

IRIE, ARE YOU HERE, SIR!?

GACHA (KACHAK)

NO, IT'S NOT TRUE!

...IRIE?

RIKA-SAN, IRIE-SENSEI IS BUSY RIGHT NOW.

WOULD YOU MIND WAITING UNTIL HE'S OFF THE PHONE?

OKAY, SIR.

OKONOGI, ONE OF TAKANO'S MEN, IS THE LEADER OF THE WILD DOGS.

IF ANYONE KNOWS WHAT HAPPENED TO HER, HE DOES.

THE HIGHER-UPS ARE INVESTIGATING RIGHT NOW. I REALLY CAN'T SAY MUCH.

...WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED, OKONOGI, SIR?

BUT...

CHIRA (GLANCE)

...I THINK THERE'S DEFINITELY A STRONG POSSIBILITY THAT IT WAS AN INSIDE JOB.

... KNOWING THE RELA-TIONSHIP BETWEEN THE TWO VICTIMS ...

...THEY SUSPECT IRIE?

...IN COUNT-LESS WORLDS.

BUT I'VE SEEN HOW SINCERE AND EARNEST HE IS...

IT'S TRUE THAT THE ONLY PERSON WHO COULD HAVE MADE SURE TOMITAKE DIED LIKE THAT WOULD BE THE RESEARCHER, IRIE.

THIS IS UNBELIEV-ABLE! WHY WOULD I HAVE KILLED THEM!?

ガチャン！

GACHAN (SLAM)

I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT HE WOULD HAVE DONE THIS.

IF IT WAS AN INSIDE JOB, SIR...

...THEN ISN'T IT POSSIBLE THAT THE REAL KILLER IS TAKANO?

TAKANO-SAN...?

NO... SHE WOULD NEVER...

RIKA-SAN.

IS IT TRUE THAT TAKANO ISN'T REALLY DEAD, SIR?

OOISHI TOLD ME.

AND DON'T YOU THINK IT'S RUDE TO ACCUSE SOMEONE WHO HAS BEEN SO KIND TO YOU?

YOU SHOULDN'T GO AROUND SAYING THOSE THINGS WITHOUT PROOF.

THE GIFU PREFECTURAL POLICE HAVE OFFICIALLY DECLARED TAKANO-SAN DEAD.

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT?

YOU SHOULDN'T TAKE HIM TOO SERIOUSLY.

HE HAS A TENDENCY TO TWIST THE FACTS.

DETECTIVE OOISHI IS JUST ANXIOUS BECAUSE HE'S GETTING CLOSE TO RETIRE-MENT.

!

THEY'VE ORDERED ME TO PUT YOU AND DR. IRIE UNDER OUR HIGHEST LEVEL OF SECURITY.

THE HIGHER-UPS ARE CONCERNED ABOUT THE SITUATION.

BESIDES, RIKA-SAN.

YOU HAVE NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT.

YOU DON'T NEED TO GO TO THE POLICE. WE'LL MAKE SURE YOU DON'T HAVE ANY PROBLEMS.

YES. OUR SECURITY IS AIRTIGHT.

WELL, THAT'S ONE LESS THING TO WORRY ABOUT.

OR ELSE CIRCUM-STANCES MAY REQUIRE ME TO ERASE THEM, FOR CONFIDENTI-ALITY PURPOSES.

IN FACT, I'D RATHER YOU NOT GO TO THE POLICE. WE CAN'T HAVE YOU SAYING TOO MUCH TO THEM.

YES, SIR...

カナカナカナ
KANA
KANA
KANA (CHIRP)
KANA
カナカナカナ
KANA
KANA
KANA
EVEN WITH TAKANO DEAD, THE WILD DOGS WILL PROTECT ME.
THIS IS A FIRST.
ドクン
DOKUN
SO WHY...?
WHY DO I FEEL SO UNEASY?
ドクン
DOKUN
ドクン
DOKUN THUMP
...IT'S JUST...
THAT'S NOTHING FOR ME TO BE AFRAID OF NOW.
THAT CAN'T BE WHY. I KNOW HOW THE WILD DOGS ARE— I KNOW THAT'S HOW THEY WORK.
ドクン
DOKUN
ドクン
DOKUN
IS IT BECAUSE HE SAID HE'D ERASE SOMEONE IF I SAID TOO MUCH?

AS A NURSE, SHE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO GET THE DRUG.

AND IT EXPLAINS WHY SHE WENT HOME ALONE LAST NIGHT.

...IT FEELS MORE PLAUSIBLE TO THINK THAT TAKANO WAS THE KILLER.

IF TAKANO REALLY IS THE MURDERER ...

...THERE'S A STRONG POSSIBILITY THE WILD DOGS, HER PERSONAL FORCE, ARE IN ON IT.

...THAT'S MAKING ME FEEL SO UNEASY?

IS IT THAT SUSPICION, SMALL AS IT IS...

"SUSPICION"?

IT CAN'T BE.

HA (GASP)

IS THIS THE ONSET OF HINAMI-ZAWA SYN-DROME?

IS THE PARANOIA TAKING HOLD OF ME?

BUT...

OH NO ...!

I DON'T KNOW.

I DON'T KNOW!!

OR AM I JUST BEING MANIPULATED BY OOISHI'S INFORMATION?

BUT WAIT.

IS TAKANO REALLY THE KILLER?

IF TAKANO IS THE KILLER, THEN WHY DID SHE DO IT?

WHAT'S HER MOTIVE?

...THE MORE I THINK ABOUT IT, THE LESS I CAN TELL.

I CAN'T TELL WHAT'S TRUE...

...OR WHAT'S FALSE ANY-MORE!

WHO ARE MY FRIENDS? WHO ARE MY ENEMIES!?

WHAT SHOULD I DO...?

SINCE YES-TERDAY, I'VE BEEN TRYING TO FIGURE OUT...

...IF TAKANO IS THE ONE WHO KILLED TOMITAKE, BUT I HAVE NO IDEA.

TODAY IS TUES-DAY, JUNE 21, 1983.

IS IT... HOPE-LESS THIS TIME TOO?

CHAPTER 19: LINGERING
ATTACHMENT TO THIS WORLD

IF IT'S THE FIFTH YEAR IN A ROW, I CAN'T HELP BUT BE WEIRDED OUT.

MAYBE IT REALLY IS OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE?

RUMORS SPREAD LIKE WILDFIRE.

THAT'S HINA-MIZAWA FOR YOU.

THEY'RE GOING TO KILL ME NEXT.

THERE'S STILL SOMEONE OUT THERE, AN UNKNOWN ENEMY, MAKING THIS HAPPEN.

BUT IT'S NOT A CURSE.

AND BASED ON ALL MY EXPERIENCES REPEATING THIS WORLD...

...I COULD BE MURDERED AS SOON AS TOMORROW NIGHT...

RIKA.

YOU DON'T HAVE ANY REGRETS, SIR?

SO THERE'S NO POINT IN FEARING IT.

I DON'T REALLY HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF MY DEATH, SO THERE'S NOTHING ABOUT IT TO BE AFRAID OF.

EVERY TIME I REPEAT THIS WORLD, I AM MURDERED WITHOUT FAIL.

OF COURSE I HAVE REGRETS.

...I CAN'T STAND IT.

GU (CLENCH)

BUT...

YOU DID YOUR BEST, RIKA.

THIS TIME WAS THE MOST FUN YOU'VE EVER HAD AT THE COTTON DRIFTING.

ISN'T THAT RIGHT, SIR?

...YES.

SATOKO'S FACE WAS COVERED IN BANDAGES...

I DID HAVE FUN.

I REALLY DID.

IN THIS WORLD, KEIICHI NEVER EXPERI-ENCED THAT ODD SENSE OF ALIEN-ATION...

...AND ALL OF MY FRIENDS GOT ALONG.

...BUT WE WERE ALL TOGETHER, GOOFING OFF WITH ALL OUR HEARTS.

THE TWINS ARE GETTING ALONG...

...AND SHION AND SATOKO HAVE BECOME VERY GOOD FRIENDS.

RENA'S FAMILY SITUATION IS GOING SMOOTHLY.

WE SOLVED THE TEPPEI PROBLEM...

...AND WE EVEN BROKE DOWN THE WALL BETWEEN SATOKO AND THE OTHER VILLAGERS.

...COULD POSSIBLY BE ANY BETTER...!

NO WORLD ...

BUT WE'LL SURELY HAVE FUN IN THE NEXT WORLD TOO, SIR.

THE NEXT...

...WORLD?

IS IT OVER FOR THIS WORLD?

BUT IT WAS SUCH A GOOD WORLD...

IS IT REALLY OVER?

RIKA...

TO US, DEATH IS JUST A MOMENT OF SLEEP.

WHETHER YOU FEEL ANY ATTACHMENT TO THIS WORLD OR NOT, SOON YOU WILL WAKE UP IN THE NEXT ONE, SIR.

...YOU DON'T KNOW HOW I FEEL, RIKA.

I'M NOT GOING TO REPEAT THIS WORLD ANYMORE!

...I TOLD YOU BEFORE!

...! HANYU ...

I DON'T WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE, SIR.

SIGN: YAKISOBA

I CAN'T TALK TO ANYONE. ALL I'VE EVER BEEN ABLE TO DO IS WATCH...

I'VE LIVED FOR ETERNITY— I CAN'T DIE.

GU (CLENCH)

I DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU...

THEN I FINALLY MET YOU, RIKA.

...STOP SAYING YOU WON'T REPEAT THE WORLD ANYMORE, SIR!

SO PLEASE ...

...HANYU ...

GIVE ME SOME TIME BEFORE I ANSWER.

I'M SORRY.

I AT LEAST...

...WANT TO KEEP FIGHTING UNTIL IT'S ALL OVER.

I UNDER-STAND, SIR.

WHY THE LONG FACE, RIKA-CHAN?

DID I LOOK DEPRESSED, SIR?

YEAH, KINDA.

KEIICHI ...

WHAT'S WRONG? SOMETHING BOTHERING YOU?

KEIICHI.

I WANT YOU TO LISTEN TO A POEM, SIR.

SURE. HOW DOES IT GO?

I JUST WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU THINK ABOUT IT, SIR.

DON'T ASK ME WHO WROTE IT.

"THE HARD PART IS THE COM-PRO-MISE."

"EVEN I HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN HAPPI-NESS.

"THE HARD PART IS ACTING ON IT.

"EVERY-ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN HAPPI-NESS.

"THE HARD PART IS ACCEPT-ING IT.

"EVERY-ONE HAS THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN HAPPI-NESS.

I DON'T REALLY GET IT.

BUT I THINK IT'S A SAD POEM.

SAD?

YEAH.

I THINK THE FIRST TWO STANZAS ARE ABOUT HOW HARD IT CAN BE.

BUT THAT DOESN'T MEAN EVERYONE HAS AN EASY TIME FINDING THAT HAPPINESS.

EVERYONE DOES HAVE THE RIGHT TO LIVE IN HAPPINESS.

...AND REALLY RELUCTANTLY, AT THAT.

...BUT THE LAST VERSE IS GIVING UP ON HAPPINESS.

RELUC-TANTLY... SIR?

"ANYBODY CAN BE HAPPY IF THEY WORK FOR IT.

"EXCEPT ME. I'LL NEVER BE HAPPY."

THE POEM IS ALL ABOUT GIVING UP.

"THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FENCE IS ALWAYS GONNA BE GREENER.

"SO I'LL JUST COMPROMISE AND MAKE DO WITH WHAT I HAVE: THE END." THAT'S WHAT THE AUTHOR'S TRYING TO TALK HIMSELF INTO

THEN, KEIICHI...

...WHAT SHOULD THE PERSON IN THE POEM DO, SIR?

?

HE SHOULD STOP BEING SO DISCOUR-AGED...

...THE PERSON WHO WROTE THAT POEM AGONIZED FOR THREE WHOLE VERSES...

...ABOUT HOW HE CAN FIND A WAY TO BE HAPPY, AND IT'S STARING HIM RIGHT IN THE FACE.

IF YOU'RE GONNA BE SO OBSESSED WITH IT...

...THEN YOU SHOULD NEVER GIVE UP, NO MATTER WHAT, RIKA-CHAN!

THERE IS SOME-THING BOTH-ERING YOU!

TELL ME ABOUT IT!

IF WE WORK TOGETHER, THEN I KNOW WE CAN FIND A SOLUTION!

...THERE IS SOME-THING I WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT...

...BUT I CAN'T, SIR.

WHY NOT?

BECAUSE IF I TELL YOU, THEY'LL KILL YOU ALL.

...KILL US?

THAT DOES SOUND LIKE A TRICKY SITUATION.

IS SOMEONE THREATENING YOU?

I DON'T KNOW WHO THE ENEMY IS YET, SIR.

BUT THERE IS ONE THING I KNOW.

AND THAT'S THAT I WILL BE MURDERED.

TELL ME.

WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED ?

RIKA-CHAN.

SU (SSK)

I'M SORRY, SIR.

IF I SAY ANY MORE, EVERYONE'S CAREFREE LIFE IN HINAMIZAWA WILL BE OVER.

WHEN YOU PUT IT LIKE THAT...

I THINK THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO COMPROMISE FOR HAPPINESS, SIR.

THAT'S WHY I CAN'T TELL YOU.

...YOU SOUND JUST LIKE SATOKO DID A FEW DAYS AGO.

LIKE SATOKO ...?

YEAH.

YOU GET THIS STUPID IDEA IN YOUR HEAD THAT PUTTING UP WITH IT MAKES YOU A GOOD PERSON...

...AND YOU FORGET ALL ABOUT HAVING THE COURAGE TO FIGHT.

GU CLENCH

WHAT HAPPENED TO THE RIKA-CHAN WHO GAVE SATOKO THAT PUSH OVER THE PHONE?

...I DON'T WANT A FUTURE WITHOUT YOU IN IT, RIKA-CHAN.

.....
...EH?

AND IN THAT CASE...

BUT...

...IF I DON'T DO ANYTHING, THEN YOU'LL BE KILLED, RIGHT?

IF I GET YOU INVOLVED, I'M SURE THEY'LL KILL YOU ALL, KEIICHI, SIR.

WELL, I WOULD HATE TO BE KILLED.

I DON'T KNOW HOW BIG THIS PROBLEM IS THAT YOU'RE HOLDING ON TO...

...BUT JUST AS MUCH AS YOU DON'T WANT TO GET US INVOLVED...

...WE DON'T WANT TO LOSE YOU EITHER.

COME TALK TO US WHEN YOU'VE GOT IT ALL SORTED OUT IN YOUR HEAD.

WE'LL DO WHATEVER IT TAKES TO HELP YOU OUT.

THANK YOU, SIR.

THE NEXT DAY.

CHUN (CHIRP)

CHUN

SHA (SHFF)

GOOD MORNING, RIKA!

GOOD MORNING, SIR.

GOSO (RUSTLE)

ビリ…

BIRI (RIP)

トタトタ

TOTA (PATTERD

TOTA

...

1983

JUNE

22

Wednesday

OH...

GYU (SQUEEZE)

ギュッ…

IT MIGHT HAPPEN...

...TODAY...

RIKA.

!

TODAY IS THE DAY.

YOU WILL BE KILLED TODAY, SIR.

...OH.

SO IT REALLY IS OVER.

YES.

THIS WORLD WILL END TOO, SIR.

LIVE TODAY SO YOU HAVE NO REGRETS...

SHUN SHOOSH

RIKA!

IF YOU DON'T GET READY SOON, YOU'LL BE LATE.

.....

RIKA?

I CAUGHT A COLD, SIR. I'M GOING TO STAY HOME FROM SCHOOL TODAY.

HA (GASP)

OH! THEN I'D BETTER GET THE THERMOMETER AND CHECK YOUR TEMPER-ATURE...

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR. IF I HAVE A FEVER, I'LL GO TO THE CLINIC.

RIKA...

...DO YOU REALLY HAVE A COLD?

AH...

KEIICHI-SAN TOLD ME.

HE SAID SOME-THING'S BOTHERING YOU...

HE SAID SOMEONE IS...

...TRYING TO KILL YOU...

I'M REALLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, SIR.

BUT...

...GOING TO THEM FOR HELP TODAY?

IT'S POINT-LESS. IT'S ALL POINT-LESS.

...PART OF ME STILL WANTS TO RESIST.

BUT ON THE OTHER HAND...

...FROM THE DAY I CAME TO THIS WORLD TO TODAY...

...I MADE MYSELF DIZZY, CHANGING MY MIND AGAIN AND AGAIN, LIKE THE WEATHER IN AUTUMN.

I PUT THE HOPELESS-NESS OF IT ALL BEHIND ME...

...I'VE BEEN DETERMINED TO FIGHT MY DESTINY...

...SO MANY MIRACLES AND HOW STRONG THE POWER OF FAITH CAN BE.

SHIT! SATOKO-CHAN!

KEIICHI AND THE OTHERS HAVE SHOWN ME...

BUT IN THE END, I JUST DON'T HAVE THE IRON WILL I NEEDED TO FIGHT MY DESTINY.

I COULDN'T BELIEVE IN MY OWN POWER!

RIKA.

SU (55K)

I'M...

...VERY HAPPY.

SATOKO?

I'M BACK WITH EVERY-ONE.

I'M BACK WITH YOU, RIKA.

THAT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY.

...SO PLEASE ...

KYU (CLASP)

IF THERE'S SOME-THING TROU-BLING YOU...

...AND IF IT MAKES YOU DISAPPEAR FROM MY LIFE...

...I WANT YOU TO THINK ABOUT JUST HOW SAD A WORLD...

...I WOULD HAVE TO KEEP LIVING IN.

I NEVER WANT TO LIVE...

...IN A WORLD WITHOUT YOU, RIKA!

A WORLD WITHOUT ME...?

...AH!

I DON'T WANT A FUTURE WITHOUT YOU IN IT, RIKA-CHAN.

PLEASE DON'T GIVE UP ON YOURSELF.

IF SOMETHING HAPPENED TO YOU, WE WOULD ALL BE MISERABLE.

PLEASE DON'T EVER FORGET THAT...!

I'VE NEVER GIVEN IT MUCH THOUGHT BEFORE...

AND THERE IS A WORLD LIKE THAT FOR EVERY TIME I'VE DIED.

BUT LIFE GOES ON FOR THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND.

IF I DIE, THE WORLD ENDS FOR ME.

ALL THIS TIME...

...ALL THIS TIME... I'VE BEEN SO SELFISH ...!

FOR THE PEOPLE LEFT BEHIND, THERE'S STILL ONLY THIS ONE WORLD.

THE END OF THIS WORLD IS THE END OF EVERY-THING.

THAT'S WHY THEY FIGHT SO DESPER-ATELY.

THAT'S HOW THEY CAN MAKE MIRA-CLES HAPPEN.

AND ALL OF MY "DESPERATE FIGHTING" HAS BEEN BARELY LUKEWARM.

BUT I'VE JUST BEEN HITTING THE RESET BUTTON ON MY LIFE.

...AND LOSING THE YEAR 1983...!

THAT'S WHY I KEEP GIVING IN TO DES-TINY...

BUT YOU'D BETTER COME TALK TO US.

RIKA...

...I'M GOING TO LEAVE YOU ALONE TODAY.

SATOKO...

...THAT'S SAD TOO.

BECAUSE WHEN YOUR FRIEND IS WORRYING ABOUT SOMETHING AND SHE WON'T COME TO YOU FOR HELP...

GYUU (SQUEEEZE)

IF I DIE...

...WILL EVERY-ONE CRY FOR ME...?

I'M SURE THEY WILL.

.....AND?

AND...

THEY'LL WONDER WHAT THEY COULD HAVE DONE TO GET RIKA-CHAN TO OPEN UP.

WHAT THEY COULD HAVE DONE TO HELP HER, TO SAVE HER...

THEY'LL BE SAD.

BUT THEY WON'T BE SAD ABOUT MY DEATH.

AND AFTER I DIE...

...THEY'LL GO ON LIVING... HOLDING ONTO THAT REGRET FOR THE REST OF THEIR LIVES.

AHH...

I SHOULD HAVE TOLD THEM EVERY-THING.

I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE ANY LINGERING ATTACHMENTS TO THIS WORLD.

MY HOPE WAS TO GET PAST JUNE IN THIS WORLD...

...AND KEEP ON GOING FOREVER.

AND YET...

...I WILL LEAVE THIS WORLD.

...VERY SOON ...

...
NGH
...

HIC...
.....

JIRIRIRIN

JIRIRIRIN
(BRRRING)

This is Zouen Okonogi. May I speak with Furude-san please?

HELLO?

GACHA (CLICK)

OKO-NOGI?

I HAVE SOME-THING URGENT TO TELL YOU, SO I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND ME CALLING YOUR HOME.

URGENT?

WHAT HAP-PENED?

It's about what happened to Mr. Tomitake.

I got word from Tokyo.

They've finished the investigation and determined that Dr. Irie is behind his death.

IRIE...

...IS BEHIND ALL OF THIS!?

EH?

NO, MORE IMPOR-TANTLY...

I WAS SURE IT WASN'T HIM.

NO... I DON'T BELIEVE IT.

...THIS IS A PHONE CALL FROM OKONOGI.

IN ALL THE WORLDS I'VE BEEN IN, I'VE NEVER GOTTEN A CALL LIKE THIS.

CAN IT BE?

IS SOME-THING THAT HAPPENED IN THIS WORLD ...

...CHANGING WHAT'S HAPPENING NOW?

IF...

...IF IT IS...

...THEN I MIGHT BE ABLE TO CHANGE MY FATE !!!

I'VE BEEN SENTENCED TO DIE TODAY.

BUT I JUST RECEIVED A PHONE CALL INFORMING ME THAT IRIE IS THE ONE BEHIND EVERYTHING.

THIS HAS NEVER HAPPENED BEFORE IN ANY OF THE MANY WORLDS I'VE LIVED IN.

MY DESTINY MIGHT BE CHANGING...!

CHAPTER 20: UNFORESEEN DEVELOPMENTS

DR. IRIE'S RESEARCH ON HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME WAS CUT SHORT.

THEY TOLD HIM TO WRAP IT UP IN A FEW YEARS, AND HE DIDN'T LIKE THAT IDEA.

SO HE'S BEEN MISAP-PROPRIATING HIS GRANT FUNDS FROM TOKYO.

TAKANO-SAN AND MR. TOMITAKE FOUND OUT ABOUT IT, SO HE DISPOSED OF THEM.

IRIE!? HE DID ALL THAT ...!?

IS THAT... TRUE, SIR?

IT'S NOT POSSIBLE!

YES.

I KNOW YOU DON'T WANT TO BELIEVE IT, BUT IT'S A FACT.

HE IS A RESEARCHER, COMPLETELY DEVOTED TO HINAMIZAWA'S STRANGE DISEASE.

I'VE WATCHED IRIE THROUGH COUNTLESS WORLDS.

HE WOULD NEVER MISAP-PROPRIATE FUNDS...

...MUCH LESS KILL TWO PEOPLE.

WE'RE AFRAID THAT IRIE WILL TRY TO USE YOU AS SOME KIND OF FINAL BARGAINING CHIP.

...HAVE ALREADY ASSIGNED TWENTY MEN WORKING IN THREE SHIFTS TO KEEP YOU SAFE AT ALL TIMES.

SO TOKYO HAS GIVEN THE ORDER, AND THE WILD DOGS...

SO WE HOPE YOU'LL REFRAIN FROM VENTURING OUTSIDE UNTIL THIS MATTER IS SETTLED.

.....

I WANTED THIS SECU-RITY.

I EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO LET TAKANO INTO THE SAIGUDEN TO GET IT.

CHIN (DING)

BUT I CAN'T TRUST OKONOGI.

WHY?

WHY IS IT ALL IRIE'S FAULT?

IRIE CAN'T POSSIBLY BE THE REAL KILLER.

THEN WHO IN THE WORLD ...

...IS THE REAL KILL-ER?

...TAKANO KILLED TOMITAKE.

WHILE MAKING IT LOOK LIKE THE FIFTH YEAR'S CURSE...

...IF SHE IS THE ONE WHO KILLED TOMI-TAKE...

IF OOISHI IS RIGHT AND TAKANO IS ACTUALLY ALIVE...

ズリ...
ZURI (STEP)

OKONOGI IS THE LEADER OF THE WILD DOGS, TAKANO'S DIRECT SUBORDI-NATE.

IS HE SETTING UP EVERY-THING TO LOOK LIKE IRIE'S FAULT?

IN THAT CASE...

GATA (CLATTER)

...TAKANO AND OKONOGI ARE MY REAL ENEMIES.

HAAH!

NO, IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE ...

AM I JUST BEING OVERLY SUSPI-CIOUS ...?

HAAH!

BUT...

HFF!

AM I BEING DEFENDED BY MY ENEMIES !!?

ZOKww (SHIVER)

OKINO-MIYA PRE-CINCT

ガチャ
GACHA (CLICK)

OOISHI, I JUST GOT A PHONE CALL FROM SOME-ONE WITH A STRANGE VOICE.

HE SAID THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO ARE PLOTTING TO KILL ME.

HELLO? SORRY TO KEEP YOU WAITING.

Is that true...!?

THE WILD DOGS HATE THE POLICE.

...THEY WON'T BE ABLE TO LAY A HAND ON ME WITH THE POLICE AROUND!

EVEN IF THE WILD DOGS ARE OUT TO GET ME...

WHEN I ASKED THEM TO ELIMI-NATE SA-TOKO'S UNCLE...

...THEY COULDN'T MAKE A MOVE BECAUSE THE POLICE HAD THEIR EYE ON HIM.

I UNDER-STAND.

I'LL SEND A FEW OFFICERS OVER TO PROTECT YOU.

OOISHI...

THANK YOU, SIR.

I'M ON MY WAY OUT TO GIFU TO LOOK INTO THE TAKANO CASE.

BUT I'LL STOP OVER SOME-TIME TONIGHT!

AND...

...HE'S GOING TO GIFU.

CHIN (DING)

I CAN REALLY DEPEND ON THIS WORLD'S OOISHI.

...THEN I CAN TRUST THE WILD DOGS.

IF THE BURNED CORPSE REALLY IS TAKA-NO'S...

...IT WILL BE ANOTHER CLUE POINT-ING TO TAKANO AS THE MASTER-MIND.

IF NOT...

EITHER WAY, I'LL BE GETTING SOME VALUABLE INFORMATION.

I DON'T WANT TO DIE.

AND SO I WILL USE THIS DAY...

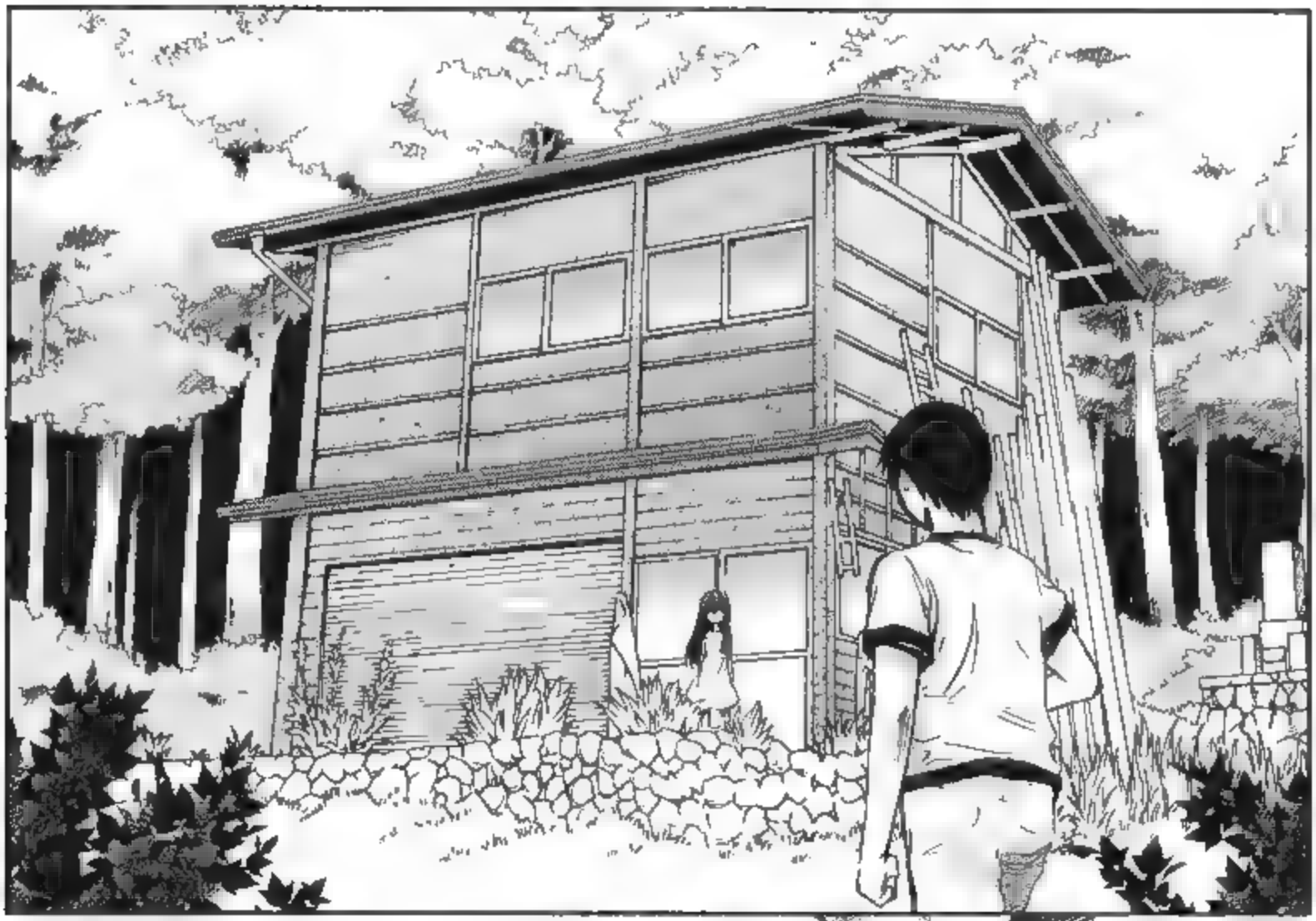
...ALL THE TIME I HAVE LEFT—
TO STRUGGLE AGAINST IT WITH ALL MY MIGHT.

DON'T RELY ON NEXT TIME JUST BECAUSE YOU THINK IT'S NOT WORKING THIS TIME.

DON'T GIVE UP. DON'T LET YOURSELF THINK IT MIGHT BE HOPELESS.

THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO FIGHT DESPERATELY.

THAT'S WHAT IT MEANS TO REALLY LIVE!



ONE APPEARS TO BE KEEPING WATCH AROUND R'S HOME.
THERE ARE TWO ON THE GROUNDS AND ONE ON THE STAIRS OUT FRONT.
PLAIN-CLOTHES COPS HAVE APPROACHED R.
THIS IS SKYLARK.
GASA (RUSTLE)

ZAZA (KSHHT)

WE'VE BEEN MONITORING HER ALL THIS TIME.

Copy that.

IT WILL HINDER OUR SURVEIL-LANCE EFFORTS.

SHE DOESN'T SEEM TO HAVE TOLD THEM ABOUT US, BUT THIS COULD BE TROUBLE.

...BUT TELL ALL TEAMS TO BE WARY OF POLICE QUESTION-ING.

I SERIOUSLY DOUBT SHE'S FIGURED US OUT...

YES, SIR.

IF THE POLICE CATCH ON TO ANYTHING, DON'T FIGHT— JUST GET OUT OF THERE.

WE DON'T WANT TO SPOIL THE BIG MISSION.

MIIIN (BUZZZZ)

MIN

MIN

HANYU ...

...ARE YOU THERE?

FU (FFT)

THESE HUNDRED YEARS, I'VE NEVER BEEN ABLE TO GET SUCH TIGHT POLICE SECURITY...

I'M HERE, SIR.

I CAN SURELY CHANGE MY DESTINY THIS TIME... DON'T YOU THINK?

I AM NOT OPTIMISTIC OR PESSIMISTIC, SIR.

I ONLY WATCH AS EVENTS COME TO THEIR CONCLUSION, SIR.

JUST A SPECTATOR, AS ALWAYS.

HANYU THINKS THAT I AM GOING TO BE KILLED TODAY.

THAT'S WHAT SHE MEANS WHEN SHE SAYS...

...SHE'S NOT OPTIMISTIC.

HANYU. YOU'VE HEARD IT A MILLION TIMES TOO.

MIRACLES CAN'T HAPPEN UNLESS WE ALL BAND TOGETHER.

BANDING TOGETHER MEANS BELIEVING.

IF WE DON'T ALL BELIEVE...

...THE MIRACLE WON'T HAPPEN!

EH?

YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND, RIKA, SIR.

I CAN'T TOUCH ANYONE. I CAN'T TALK TO ANYONE.

FOR LONG ENOUGH TO DRIVE A PERSON MAD...

...IN EVERY SITUATION, ALL I COULD DO WAS WATCH. YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND HOW I FEEL...

SUU (SHHF)

PLEASE CALL ME IF YOU NEED ANYTHING, SIR.

HANYU...

WAUH!?

TOTA

TOTA

TOTA (TROT)

TOTA

I HAVE TO TELL SATOKO WHY, OR SHE'LL THINK SOMETHING IS GOING ON.

OH, RIGHT. THERE ARE POLICE DOWN-STAIRS.

BUT...

...THAT WOULD MEAN EXPLAINING TO HER ABOUT MY LIFE BEING IN DANGER.

SA-TOKO'S VOICE.

...SATOKO WOULD BE DRAGGED INTO THE WHOLE MESS.

AND IF I DID THAT...

I HAVE TO THINK OF SOME-THING TO TELL HER...

DOTA STOMP

DOTA

RIKA!

DOTA

EVERY-ONE...!?

WHAT ARE THOSE POLICE-MEN DOING DOWN-STAIRS!?

DOES IT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH WHAT'S BEEN BOTHERING YOU?

IT MUST BE BIG IF THERE ARE PLAIN-CLOTHES COPS WANDERING AROUND!

I SEE WE WERE RIGHT TO COME CHECK ON YOU.

AH...

RIKA-CHAN.

TELL US WHAT'S GOING ON!

I KNOW YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT GETTING US INVOLVED.

BUT WE GOT IN-VOLVED ...

...THE SECOND YOU WERE IN TROUBLE, RIKA-CHAN!

BESIDES, IF IT'S SOMETHING AS BAD AS SOMEONE TRYING TO KILL YOU, THAT'S ALL THE MORE REASON TO CALL THE SONOZAKIS!

IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM, IT'S THE WHOLE CLUB'S PROBLEM!

THAT'S RIGHT!

WE'RE FRIENDS! WE'RE A CLUB!

RIKA ...

MY FRIENDS ...

WE'LL BE MUCH MORE HELPFUL THAN SOME RANDOM POLICE OFFICERS.

BE-CAUSE ...

...BUT YOU CAN'T COME TO US?

...WHY IS IT THAT YOU CAN GO TO THE POLICE...

...I DON'T WANT TO CAUSE TROUBLE FOR ANY OF YOU, SIR.

—!

YOU TOLD ME TO HAVE THE COURAGE TO FIGHT!

YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF, RIKA!

BUT HERE YOU ARE, PUTTING UP WITH IT ALL ALONE— NOT TAKING YOUR OWN ADVICE!!

...I KNOW YOU WON'T BELIEVE ME, SIR.

BUT...

NO.

NO MATTER WHAT YOU TELL US, RIKA-CHAN, AS LONG AS YOU'RE TELLING THE TRUTH, WE'LL BELIEVE YOU.

AND THEN ...

...WE'LL FIGHT WITH YOU!

THAT'S RIGHT.

...OH.

THAT'S HOW WE'VE BEEN FIGHTING AGAINST DESTINY ALL THIS TIME.

THAT'S WHAT WE'VE BEEN DOING.

DIDN'T I DECIDE THAT I DON'T WANT TO DIE?

THAT I WOULD FIGHT?

ALL RIGHT.

I'LL TELL YOU, SIRS.

...IS CAUSING THIS WORLD TO CHANGE...

AND IF MY TELLING OOISHI ABOUT TOMITAKE'S DEATH ON THE NIGHT OF THE COTTON DRIFTING...

ABOUT MY LIFE BEING IN DANGER ...

... AND ...

...ABOUT HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME!

...SYN-DROME?

HINAMI-ZAWA...

I'LL TELL MY FRIENDS EVERY-THING.

AND...

...I'LL GIVE MYSELF A CHANCE TO CHANGE THIS FATE!

YES.

UNDER-
STOOD.

WELL?

NIYA
(SMIRK)

WE FOLLOW THE PLAN.

WE MAKE SURE R'S CORPSE IS READY BY TOMORROW MORNING.

WORRIED THAT I'D STAYED HOME FROM SCHOOL ...

...MY FRIENDS ALL CAME TO SEE ME.

THEY BELIEVE WHAT I TOLD THEM ABOUT MY LIFE BEING IN DANGER...

...AND HAVE PROMISED TO FIGHT WITH ME.

SO I WILL TELL THEM EVERY-THING.

CHAPTER 21: HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME

MIIIN (BUZZZZ)

MIN

MIN

THIS VILLAGE HAS A LOCAL DISEASE CALLED HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME, SIRS.

1983

NEVER HEARD OF IT.

NONE OF THE VILLAGERS HAVE.

THEY DISCOVERED IT DURING THE WAR...

...WHEN SOLDIERS FROM HINAMIZAWA STARTED GOING MAD, ONE AFTER ANOTHER, SIR.

WHEN THE DISEASE HITS, THE VICTIM IS SEIZED WITH PARANOIA.

HE KILLS HIS ALLIES...

...MAKES HIM PERCEIVE EVERYONE AROUND HIM AS AN ENEMY.

THE EXTREME PERSECUTION COMPLEX IT CAUSES ...

...AND EVENTUALLY KILLS HIMSELF IN A BIZARRE WAY— BY SCRATCHING OUT HIS THROAT.

...WE'VE LEARNED THAT THE DISEASE IS LOCAL TO HINAMIZAWA, SIRS.

THANKS TO THE DOCTOR WHO DISCOVERED THE ILLNESS...

GOKURI (GULP)

FURTHERMORE, WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY-ONE LIVING IN HINAMIZAWA HAS BEEN INFECTED...

...AND WHEN THEY LEAVE THE VILLAGE OR WHEN STRESS MAKES THEM OVERLY SUSPI-CIOUS...

...THE DISEASE WILL MANIFEST ITSELF, SIRS.

...JUST LIKE IN ONE WORLD...

...WHEN IT MANIFESTED IN KEIICHI AFTER ONLY A FEW DAYS AWAY FROM THE VILLAGE.

MORE EVIDENCE OF THIS DISEASE IS FOUND IN THE LEGEND ...

...WHICH HAS BEEN PASSED DOWN IN HINAMIZAWA SINCE THE TIME OF ANCIENT ONIGAFUCHI.

FOR EXAMPLE, OYASHIRO-SAMA'S TEACHING TO ISOLATE THE VILLAGE AND NOT LET OUTSIDERS IN...

...MIGHT BE SEEN AS A MEANS TO PREVENT THE ACTIVATION OF SYMPTOMS IN THE VILLAGERS AS WELL AS THE INFECTION OF MORE VICTIMS, SIR.

IN OTHER WORDS, AS LONG AS THE VILLAGERS FOLLOW OYASHIRO-SAMA'S DOCTRINES ...

...THEY CAN COEXIST WITH THIS LOCAL DISEASE, SIRS.

ALSO, THE CRUEL RITUALS PERFORMED WITH THOSE TORTURE DEVICES ...

...MIGHT HAVE BEEN A DETERRENT TO ENSURE THE VILLAGERS ADHERED STRICTLY TO THOSE PRECEPTS.

SO WHY DON'T THEY MAKE KNOWLEDGE OF THE DISEASE PUBLIC? IT SOUNDS PRETTY DANGEROUS.

BECAUSE THEY HAVEN'T ESTABLISHED A WAY TO TREAT IT...

...A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD ONLY MAKE THE VILLAGERS UNEASY.

THE FACILITY WHERE THAT'S HAPPENING IS IRIE CLINIC.

BUT THEY ARE LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE DISEASE AND MAKING PROGRESS IN FINDING A CURE.

IRIE AND HIS STAFF...

...ARE RESEARCHERS SENT HERE IN STRICT CONFIDENTIALITY, SIR.

BY...

...A SECRET ORGANIZA-TION THAT CALLS ITSELF "TOKYO."

SENT? BY WHOM?

PEOPLE WHO HAVE ENOUGH POWER AND MONEY TO INFLUENCE THE GOVERNMENT, SIRS.

I DON'T KNOW ALL THE DETAILS, SIR.

BUT I THINK TOKYO IS MADE UP OF SENIOR MEMBERS OF JAPAN'S POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC CIRCLES.

...IRIE CLINIC, ALSO KNOWN AS THE IRIE INSTITUTE.

WITH THEIR POWER AND INFLUENCE, THEY ESTAB-LISHED...

BUT IRIE, THE DIRECTOR OF THE FACILITY, IS MORE PAS-SIONATE ABOUT RESEARCHING A CURATIVE DRUG. HE'S NOT INTERESTED IN ITS MILITARY USES.

HE'S MANAGED TO DEVELOP AN INJECTION THAT CAN EVEN SUPPRESS LEVEL FIVE— THE WORST STAGE OF THE DISEASE.

...TO USE HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME AS A BIOLOGICAL WEAPON.

WHEN IT STARTED, THEY WERE PLOTTING TO FIND A WAY...

A FEW YEARS AGO, THE WILD DOGS KIDNAPPED THE MINISTER OF CONSTRUCTION'S GRANDSON...

...IN AN EFFORT TO STOP THE DAM PROJECT, WHICH WOULD HAVE GROUND THE RESEARCH TO A HALT.

AND THEY PROBABLY COMMITTED ALL THE OTHER MURDERS THAT EVERYONE ATTRIBUTES TO THE SONOZAKIS.

THEY'RE A TASK FORCE THAT SPECIALIZES IN KIDNAPPING, WIRETAPPING, AND MANIPULATING INFORMATION, SIR.

AND TO HELP HER WITH THAT TASK ARE HER SUBORDINATES, THE WILD DOGS.

TOMITAKE WAS THE LIAISON SENT FROM "TOKYO" FOUR TIMES A YEAR.

HIS JOB WAS TO ASSESS THE RESEARCH, ADJUST THE BUDGET, AND REPORT BACK, SIR.

IN OTHER WORDS, HER MOST IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT WAS TO COVER UP ANY SITUATION THAT MIGHT HAVE RESULTED IN THE DISCOVERY OF THE DISEASE.

TAKANO WAS RESPONSIBLE FOR ADVANCING THE RESEARCH AND MAINTAINING CONFIDENTIALITY.

MIIIN (BUZZZZ)

MIN

MIN

HEY, COME ON. THIS IS INSANE.

YOU'RE SAYING WE'RE ALL INFECTED WITH THIS TERRIBLE DISEASE...

...AND COACH AND TAKANO-SAN ARE RESEARCHING IT...?

BUT HOW DOES THAT HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU BEING KILLED, RIKA-CHAN?

ARE THEY AFTER YOU BECAUSE YOU KNOW THEIR SECRET OR SOMETHING?

EARLIER I SAID THAT IF YOU LEAVE HINAMIZAWA, YOU'LL GET SICK.

BUT ACCORDING TO IRIE'S RESEARCH, THE TRUTH IS...

...IF YOU'RE TOO FAR AWAY FROM ME—FROM THE QUEEN CARRIER...

...THEN THE SYMPTOMS WILL MANIFEST, SIR.

FOR GENERATIONS, THE FURUDE FAMILY HAS CARRIED THE BOSS-LEVEL PATHOGEN INSIDE OUR BODIES.

QUEEN CARRIER?

...THAT RELAXES THE SYMPTOMS OF HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME.

AND, LIKE A QUEEN BEE, WE EMIT A TYPE OF PHEROMONE...

BECAUSE OF THIS, THE WILD DOGS HAVE MADE PROTECTING ME, THE QUEEN, THEIR TOP PRIORITY.

...AND THAT'S WHY THEY'RE ALWAYS SO KIND TO THE WOMEN OF THE FURUDE FAMILY, SIR.

IT MAY BE THAT THE INFECTED VILLAGERS OF HINAMIZAWA KNOW THAT INSTICTIVELY...

H-HANG ON A SEC.

SO IF THEY KILL YOU...

WE'RE ALL INFECTED, RIGHT?

EXACTLY.

IF I DIE...

...AND THE WHOLE VILLAGE WILL BECOME A LIVING HELL, EVERYONE TURNING ON ONE ANOTHER TO SURVIVE!!!

THEY'LL BE OVERCOME BY A TERRIBLE PERSECUTION COMPLEX...

THE TERMINAL SYMPTOMS WILL MANIFEST IN ALL TWO THOUSAND VILLAGERS OF HINAMI-ZAWA.

YOU'RE KIDDING...

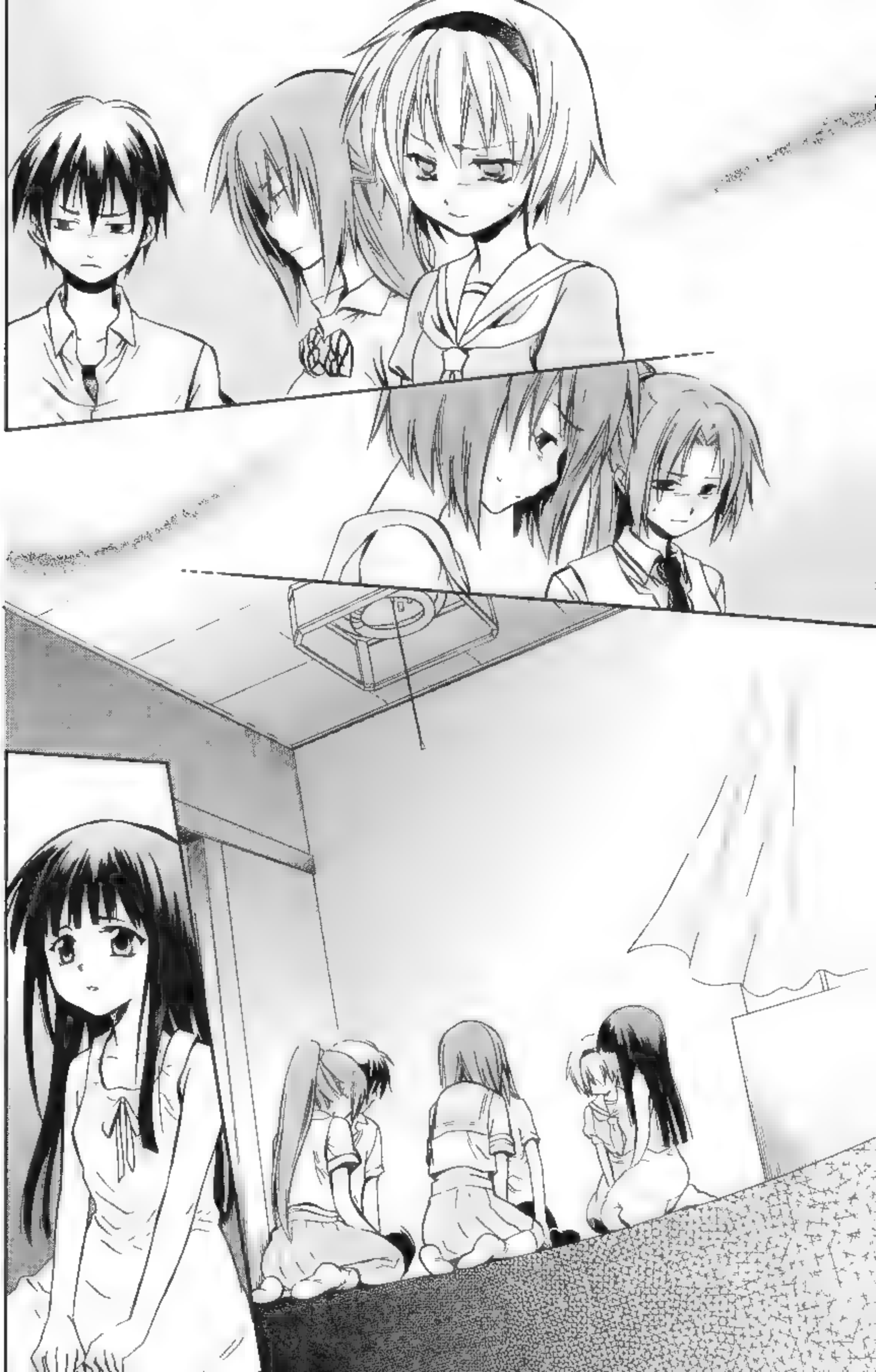
!!!

BUT SOMEONE IS WILLING TO RISK THAT...

...IN ORDER TO KILL ME...!!!

MY DEATH WILL BE THE DEATH OF THE VILLAGE.

AND I DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'LL GET OUT OF IT...



KYU (CLENCH)

IT'S ONLY NATURAL THAT YOU WOULDN'T BELIEVE ME, SIRS...

I DON'T THINK EVEN OOISHI WOULD BELIEVE ME RIGHT AWAY, AND HE LOVES CRAZY RUMORS.

HE WOULD DOUBT IT TOO.

YOU'RE RIGHT.

NORMALLY, WE WOULDN'T BELIEVE A STORY LIKE THAT.

I MEAN, YOU'RE SAYING THAT IF YOU'RE KILLED...

...THEN WE'LL ALL KILL EACH OTHER.

KYU (GRIT)

...BUT...

...AFTER I HEARD YOUR POEM YESTERDAY, RIKA-CHAN...

...I KNEW JUST HOW SERIOUSLY YOU'VE BEEN WORRYING ABOUT THIS.

GU (CLENCH)

I BELIEVE EVERY-THING YOU TOLD US!!

SO I BELIEVE YOU!

YEAH.

YOU TOLD US IN ALL EARNEST-NESS, RIKA-CHAMA.

THAT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

KEI-CHAN'S EXACTLY RIGHT.

ACTUALLY, I FEEL BETTER NOW THAT I'VE LEARNED SOME OF THE VILLAGE'S SECRETS!

I'M PROUD OF YOU, RIKA-CHAN.

...CARRYING THIS TERRIBLE BURDEN ALL BY YOURSELF FOR SO LONG.

IT MUST HAVE BEEN HARD...

MY FRIENDS ...

SO...

...TOMITAKE-SAN AND TAKANO-SAN WERE KILLED THE OTHER NIGHT.

AND THAT'S BECAUSE THEY WERE PART OF TOKYO?

YES.

AND WHOEVER KILLED THEM IS AFTER YOU...

THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT TOO.

THAT'S NOT RIGHT?

SO TAKANO-SAN IS STILL ALIVE?

ACTUALLY, OOISHI SAYS IT'S POSSIBLE THAT THE BODY MAY HAVE BEEN MISIDENTIFIED AS TAKANO'S.

IF SHE IS, THEN THERE'S A STRONG CHANCE THAT SHE KILLED TOMITAKE, SIR.

BUT OKONOGI— ONE OF THE WILD DOGS— SAYS THAT IRIE IS THE MASTERMIND BEHIND IT ALL.

AND IF TAKANO IS THE KILLER, THEN THE WILD DOGS ARE OUR ENEMY TOO.

COACH DOESN'T SEEM THE TYPE.

SO WAS TOMITAKE-SAN'S KILLER TAKANO-SAN...

...OR COACH IRIE?

I SAY GUILTY UNTIL PROVEN INNO-CENT!

WE SHOULD ASK FOR HELP FROM SOMEONE WHO HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH THAT "TOKYO" BUSINESS.

IN THAT CASE, IT WAS A GOOD IDEA TO ASK OOISHI-SAN FOR BACKUP.

...I HAVEN'T TOLD OOISHI EVERYTHING YET.

BUT...

HE DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT TOKYO OR THE WILD DOGS.

THEN I THINK WE SHOULD TELL OOISHI THE TRUTH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

YES, SIR.

WHEN HE COMES BACK FROM CHECKING ON TAKANO'S BODY IN GIFU.

JIRIRIRIN (BRRRING)

GACHA (CLICK)

HELLO? FURUDE SPEAKING, SIR.

OOISHI ...!

WHERE ARE YOU NOW, SIR?

OH, GOOD, YOU'RE STILL ALIVE!

AT A GAS STATION ON MY WAY BACK TO OKINOMIYA.

WE'VE FINALLY GOT OYASHIRO-SAMA BY THE TAIL!

BUT ANYWAY, THE GUYS IN GIFU WERE WRONG!

The burned corpse is a fake!

It isn't Takano's body.

TAKANO IS ALIVE!!

THEN...

...TAKANO DID KILL TOMITAKE !!!

And we've just started the search for Takano.

Yes. We've concluded that is very likely.

I'VE MADE UP MY MIND TO TELL YOU EVERY-THING, SIR.

GU (CLENCH)

IF OOISHI HADN'T BEEN ON MY SIDE, I NEVER WOULD HAVE GOTTEN THIS INFORMATION !!

..., Ooishi.

YES?

MY, MY.

WHAT KIND OF STORY WILL YOU TELL ME, I WONDER. I CAN'T WAIT TO HEAR IT.

I think I can make it to your house in about an hour.

I'll see you then!

YES, SIR.

SOUNDS LIKE IT'S SETTLED.

NI (SMIRK)

TAKANO'S BODY WAS A FAKE!

YES, SIR!

AFTER A HUNDRED YEARS, I'VE FINALLY FIGURED IT OUT.

TAKANO KILLED TOMITAKE, AND SHE'S GOING TO KILL ME NEXT!!

I DON'T KNOW WHY TAKANO WOULD NEED TO KILL ME...

BUT I DO KNOW...

...AND MY DESTINY WILL CHANGE ...!!!

NOW WE JUST NEED OOISHI TO GET HERE...

...I HAVE FRIENDS ON MY SIDE!

...THAT RIGHT NOW...

70

BURRRR... VRRRROOM

20:06

IT'S PROBABLY GOING TO BE AN OUTRAGEOUS STORY.

...I'M REALLY CURIOUS ABOUT WHATEVER IT IS THAT RIKA FURUDE WANTS TO TELL YOU.

YOU SEE, THAT VILLAGE'S REAL NAME IS ONIGAFUCHI VILLAGE.

AND DEMONS LIVE THERE.

BURORO (VROOM)

KUMA-CHAN, STOP THE CAR!

!?

KIKI!!
(SCREE)

THAT CAR. WHAT IS IT DOING THERE, I WONDER?

WH-WHAT'S WRONG?

SOME-
THING
SMELLS
FISHY.

THERE
AREN'T ANY
RESIDENTIAL
BUILDINGS
THIS DEEP
IN THE
MOUNTAINS.

IT'S
PROBABLY
A RELAY
STATION,
CONNECTING
THE TOWN
AND THE
VILLAGE.

SOME
ILLEGAL
DUMPING,
PERHAPS?

MAYBE
THEY'RE
WORK-
ING?

...ACCORDING
TO THE MAP,
THAT'S A NIPPON
TELEGRAPH AND
TELEPHONE
CORPORATION
BUILDING.

THAT'S A GOOD POINT... AND IF THEY WERE FROM NTT, THE NAME WOULD BE ON THEIR VEHICLE.

THAT VAN DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT BELONGS TO A PRIVATE CONTRACTOR EITHER.

I DON'T THINK SO.

CON-STRUC-TION WORK AT THIS HOUR?

GACHA (KACHAK)

I THINK IT WOULD BE FASTER TO ASK THEM DIRECTLY.

OOISHI-SAN?

ZA

IT'S POSSIBLE THAT WE'VE COME ACROSS "OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE."

HELLO THERE. SORRY TO INTERRUPT YOUR WORK.

I'M WITH THE POLICE.
WHO MIGHT YOU BE?
SU (S6K)

UM, THAT WOULD BE OKINO-MIYA.

OH? WHERE IS YOUR MAIN OFFICE?

WE'RE FROM OKONOGI ELECTRIC.

I'VE NEVER HEARD OF IT.

COULD I GET A BUSI-NESS CARD?

OH, I'M SORRY. I'M OUT RIGHT NOW.

I SEE.

GIRO (GLARE)

YOU MEN...

...ARE NOT ELECTRI-CIANS!

ビク

BIKU (WINCE)

THE TIME OF DAY IS SUSPECT...

...AND YOUR BEHAVIOR IS SUSPECT.

LOOKS LIKE THEY DO HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS CASE...

NN FU FU.

GIVE ME THE TRUTH, AND I'LL GO EASY ON YOU.

WHO IN BLAZES ARE YOU?

YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY UP TO SOME-THING!

JARI
CORLINCHO

CHA CHAK

PAAAN
(BANG)

O—

GOPU (GLRP)

OOISHI-SAN!

ABOUT THE "MASSACRE ARC": HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME AND PARANOIA

ORIGINAL STORY, SUPERVISOR: RYUKISHI07

HELLO, I'M RYUKISHI07.

ONE OF THE THEMES IN *HIGURASHI WHEN THEY CRY* IS THE IDEA THAT IF YOU STOP COMMUNICATING AND SUCCUMB TO PARANOIA, IT WILL ALWAYS SPARK A TRAGEDY. TO DEPICT THIS "IT WILL ALWAYS SPARK A TRAGEDY" ASPECT IN A VERY CLEAR, ORGANIC WAY WITH NO AMBIGUITY WHATSOEVER, I CAME UP WITH "HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME." ANYONE WHO MANIFESTS HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME GIVES IN TO EXTREME PARANOIA AND AS A RESULT CAUSES MULTIPLE TRAGEDIES. THE IMPORTANT POINT HERE IS THAT HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME DOESN'T CAUSE THE TRAGEDIES DIRECTLY BUT INDIRECTLY. IT'S TRUE THAT WHEN THE SYMPTOMS ACTIVATE, THE VICTIM MAY CAUSE A TRAGEDY AND KILL SOMEONE. HOWEVER, IT WAS THE PERSON WHO COMMITTED THE MURDER, NOT HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME. THE SYNDROME DROVE THEM TO KILL.

IT'S EASY FOR US TO UNDERSTAND DIRECT CRIMES. HE WANTED MONEY, HE KILLED SOMEONE, HE TOOK THEIR MONEY. IF THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT, IT'S VERY EASY TO BLAME THE CRIMINAL. BUT IF WE KNEW THE FOLLOWING ABOUT THAT PERSON'S HISTORY, THEN MAYBE OUR OPINION WOULD CHANGE A LITTLE: THE KILLER HAS BEEN CRUELLY ABUSED SINCE HE WAS YOUNG. HE HAS ABSOLUTELY NO SELF-ESTEEM. HE'S ALWAYS BEEN FORCED INTO A SUBSERVIENT POSITION, AND AS A RESULT HE HAD NO TIME TO WORRY ABOUT SCHOOL AND HAD TO ENTER THE REAL WORLD WITH A VERY POOR ACADEMIC HISTORY. UNABLE TO CHOOSE A CAREER, HE FINALLY FOUND A JOB, BUT BECAUSE OF HIS SERVILE ATTITUDE, HE BECAME A TARGET FOR BULLYING AND WAS FORCED TO CHANGE JOBS AGAIN AND AGAIN. IN THE END, IN DESPERATE NEED OF MONEY AND DRIVEN TO THE EDGE MENTALLY AND EMOTIONALLY, THE ONLY OPTION HE CAN SEE IS THE AFOREMENTIONED TRAGEDY. OF COURSE, KNOWING THIS DOESN'T CHANGE THE FACT THAT WHAT HE DID WAS WRONG. HOWEVER, NOW THAT WE KNOW ALL THIS, I THINK WE MIGHT START TO THINK THAT SOME OF THE BLAME LIES IN THE ENVIRONMENT THAT CREATED THE CRIMINAL.

THE EMOTION OF PARANOIA IS NO MORE THAN A SYMPTOM OF POOR COMMUNICATION, AND THAT IS ONE OF THE MANY THEMES I WANTED TO BRING ACROSS IN THIS WORK. IN THE CASE OF THE PARANOID KEIICHI COMMITTING MURDER, OF COURSE KEIICHI SHOULD BE BLAMED. BUT WHEN I THINK OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT FORCED KEIICHI TO MURDER, I THINK IT'S NOT RIGHT TO ACCUSE ONLY KEIICHI. AND TO MAKE THAT A LITTLE EASIER TO UNDERSTAND, I CAME UP WITH THIS TERM "HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME." WHEN SOMEONE FALLS PREY TO THIS ILLNESS, THEY BECOME EXTREMELY PARANOID AND AGGRESSIVE, AND THEY CAUSE TRAGEDIES. THESE TRAGEDIES ARE VERY UNFORTUNATE, AND WHILE THE DISEASED IS STILL A CRIMINAL, HE OR SHE IS ALSO A VICTIM (A PATIENT). THAT SHOULD BE PRETTY EASY TO UNDERSTAND. IN OTHER WORDS, THE NAME OF THE SICKNESS, HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME, IS JUST A KEY WORD TO REPRESENT THE "ENVIRONMENT AND HISTORY" THAT DROVE THE CRIMINAL TO MURDER. HOWEVER, BY UNDERSTANDING THE NAME OF THE ILLNESS, IT BECOMES POSSIBLE FOR US TO MOVE FROM A POSITION OF MERELY BLAMING THE PERSON WHO COMMITTED THE MURDER AND TO DIRECT OUR ATTENTION AND QUESTIONS TO THE ENVIRONMENT THAT CREATED THE MURDERER.

IS THERE SOMEONE CLOSE TO YOU WHOSE ISOLATION AND HELPLESSNESS ARE AMPLIFYING HIS PARANOIA AND LEADING HIM TO AGGRESSIVE BEHAVIOR? IT'S EASY TO TALK BEHIND THAT PERSON'S BACK AND SAY, "OH, HE'S NOT VERY SOCIAL," OR "HE'S WEIRD AND CREEPY." BUT BEFORE WE START PREJUDGING HIM, WHY NOT THINK ABOUT THE ENVIRONMENT THAT MADE HIM WHAT HE IS—WHY IS HE IN THAT SHELL, WHAT MADE HIM SO HARD TO APPROACH? HE MIGHT ACTUALLY BE A NICE PERSON WHO JUST WANTS FRIENDS. MAYBE HE'S HAD A LOT OF BAD EXPERIENCES THAT MAKE HIM AFRAID TO ASSOCIATE WITH OTHER PEOPLE, AND HE'S TRYING TO PROTECT HIMSELF BY BEING THE FIRST TO ATTACK, SHIELDING HIMSELF WITH THE QUILLS OF COWARDICE... PLEASE LOOK AT THE PEOPLE AROUND YOU AND NOTICE IF THEY HAVE HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME. HE DIDN'T DO ANYTHING WRONG. IT'S HIS ILLNESS THAT'S MAKING HIM BAD.

HOW CAN WE BREAK THE BONDS OF HINAMIZAWA SYNDROME? IT'S NOT AN EASY THING TO DO, BUT I'M SURE ALL OF YOU WHO HAVE BEEN WITH THE STORY THIS LONG ALREADY KNOW THE ANSWER.

I want to work even harder on the next volume!

Rika-chan Kongming

Shuan: Liu Bei
Sakaki: Zhao Yun
Inue: Zhang Jiao
Mom: Gwan Yu
RICE

Special[x2] thanks!!

Original Story, Supervisor: Ryukishi07-sama, Jika-sama, Tsubaki Naruse-sama, Kakumu-sama, and BT-sama
Editors: Nakagawa-sama, Kozumi-sama
My assistants: Ekuni-kun, Hime-sama, Mito-sama, Motchii-sama, Yuukarin, Aoi Shouno-sama, Maruyama-sama, Tsuchii-sensei, Cyco-sama, & my family
& YOU!!

Hanae: Xu Shu
HINA
Omishi: Pang Tong
Rena: Zhang Fei
I love Shiyuan!!

Keiichi: Liu Bei

Romance of the Three Kingdoms cosplay.
Sorry it's all my eccentric tastes. ^

I THINK IT WOULD'VE BEEN HARD TO TOSS THE BODY WITHOUT HELP

ZUSHI (PANG)

!

UPSY-DAISY.

GOOD-BYE, JIROU-SAN.

BESHA (SPLAT)

H...

...HEAVY ...!

ZUSHIN

PURU

PURU

PURU (TRMBL)

BUILDING UP ALL THAT POINTLESS MUSCLE... STUPID...

AN HOUR LATER

WE EXPECTED YOU SOONER, MAJOR. WHAT TOOK YOU?

NOTH-ING.

ZEEHAA (WHEEZE)

KACHA (CLINK)

A PROBLEM? WHAT HAPPENED?

!!!

THE TEAM IN GIFU SEEMS TO HAVE RUN INTO A PROBLEM.

MAJOR! I'M TER-RIBLY SORRY.

THAT MEANS...

A MAN?

APPAR-ENTLY THEY CHOSE A MAN.

THERE WAS A MISTAKE IN THE SELECTION OF YOUR FALSE BODY.

!!

BUUU (PFFFT)

...IT WILL LOOK LIKE YOU WERE A TRANS-VESTITE.

RIGHT AWAY!

SHUBI (SALUTE)

GO FIND A WOMAN'S BODY! NOW!!

WHAT!?

GAAAN (SHOCK)

DOOON (DUN)

I BELIEVE TOMI-TAKE WAS KILLED BY TAKANO!

IT'S TIME FOR YOUR SHOT! ♡

COMING!

N-NO! IT'S NOT LIKE THAT! I HATE GETTING SHOTS!

YES.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A SNAP FOR HER TO KILL HIM, DON'T YOU THINK?

WHAT!?
がーん
GAAAN (SHOCK)
ドーン
DOOON (DUN)
I BELIEVE TOMI-TAKE WAS KILLED BY IRIE!

こんもり
KONMORI (CHEAPS)
IRIE WAS EMBEZ-ZLING FUNDS ...
...TO MASS-PRODUCE MAID UNIFORMS!

THEY REFUSED, SO HE KILLED THEM!
NOW LET'S SEE HOW YOU LOOK
HEH HEH HEH
HE FORCED HIS VICTIMS TO TRY THEM ON.

SERI-OUSLY!?
IT'S NOT EASY TO PUT THOSE ON.
IN FACT, HE'S EVEN MADE ME TRY ON THE MAID UNIFORMS.

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY
MASSACRE ARC

OOISHI-SAN!

OO-ISHI-SAN—!

AKASA (CRUSTLE)

NIGHT-INGALE 8, CLEAR.

NIGHT-INGALE 7, CLEAR.

THIS IS NIGHT-INGALE 1, CALLING THE SNIPER TEAM.

ALL GREEN.

GU (SQUEEZE)

CHAPTER 22: THE BEGINNING OF THE END

YORO (STAGGER)
BOSA (THUD)
HYUKA (WHOOSH)

ズル
ZURU (DRAG)

NIGHT-INGALE TO HQ.

WE HAVE TAKEN DOWN TWO POLICE OFFICERS.

RESUMING OPERATION.

HQ, COPY.

WE'VE TAKEN GREAT CARE IN DISPOSING OF THE POLICE VEHICLE.

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

KUSU

GOOD NIGHT, OOISHI-SAN.

AND HERE YOU THOUGHT YOU ALMOST HAD ME BY THE TAIL. TOO BAD.

BUT THERE ARE STILL OFFICERS AT R'S HOME.

I CAN'T HELP THINKING THAT SHE REALIZES WE'RE GOING TO KILL HER TONIGHT.

A PREMONI-TION.

FORE-SIGHT.

IS IT POSSIBLE THAT THE EXCESSIVE WILD DOG SECURITY HAS TIPPED HER OFF...?

NO. IT'S SOME-THING ELSE.

SHE KNEW ABOUT TOMITAKE'S DEATH, AND SHE KNEW THE STATE OF MY FAKE CORPSE— A DETAIL EVEN I DIDN'T KNOW AT THE TIME.

THAT GIRL IS THE QUEEN, YOU SEE.

...FORE-SIGHT?

A DIRECT DESCENDANT OF OYASHIRO-SAMA, THE ANCIENT GOD THAT DESCENDED UPON HINAMIZAWA IN TIMES OF OLD.

YOU CANNOT DECEIVE A GOD.

AND THAT MEANS IT WAS FATED THAT SHE WOULD NOTICE US.

ALL RIGHT, RIKA-CHAN.

くすくす (KUSUKUSU) (CHUCKLE)

LET'S FIND OUT, SHALL WE?

WHO IS MORE WORTHY TO CARRY ON THE LEGEND OF OYASHIRO-SAMA—YOU OR ME?

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

I WILL KILL YOU AND COMPLETE OYASHIRO-SAMA'S CURSE.

I WILL CREATE A NEW CURSE LEGEND.

RIII (CHIRP)

RIII

KACHI

KACHI

KACHI (TICK)

WHAT'S TAKING OOISHI-SAN SO LONG?

IT'S LONG PAST THE TIME HE SAID HE'D BE HERE.

YOU DON'T THINK HE WAS ATTACKED BY THOSE TOKYO GUYS, DO YOU...?

KEI-CHAN, THIS IS THE GREAT OOISHI WE'RE TALKING ABOUT.

HE WOULD NEVER LET ANYONE ...

THAT'S RIGHT.

EVEN ASSUMING THE WILD DOGS ARE BEHIND THIS...

...I DOUBT THEY COULD DO ANYTHING TO OOISHI. HE'S A POLICE OFFICER.

SO WHY ISN'T HE HERE?

WHAT HAP-PENED TO HIM?

I DON'T ONLY NEED HIM FOR TONIGHT...

IF I'M GOING TO KEEP BREAKING DOWN MY DESTINY TOMORROW AND THE DAY AFTER...

...I'LL NEED OOISHI'S HELP!

JARI (CRUNCH)

ダ" DA (STOMP)

ダ" DA

ダ" DA

ダ" DA

ガ" GATA (CLATTER)

ガ" タ

OOISHI !?

ガラッ GARA (SLIDE)

HAVE YOU FINALLY COME, SIR!?

IT'S NOT HIM...

GOOD EVENING. THE OKINOMIYA PRECINCT SENT US TO TAKE OVER WATCH DUTY.

WE DON'T KNOW. HE CALLED US EARLIER IN THE EVENING, BUT...

WHAT HAPPENED TO OOISHI-SAN?

THE POLICE DON'T KNOW WHERE OOISHI IS EITHER?

EH?

...SOME-THING IS WRONG...

I WAS RIGHT...

YOUR FAMILIES WILL BE WORRIED.

...BUT...

EH? BUT...

YOU ALL HAD BETTER GO HOME. IT'S LATE.

YOU CAN LEAVE THE REST TO US.

...IT IS ENCOURAGING TO HAVE TWO DETECTIVES HERE FOR ME.

THANK YOU ALL, SIRS.

THE POLICE ARE HERE. I'LL BE FINE NOW.

ARE YOU SURE YOU'LL BE FINE?

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR.

FOR ONE THING, WE DON'T HAVE ANY BEDDING OR PJ's FOR YOU.

IF IT'S NOT ANY TROUBLE, WE CAN STAY THE NIGHT TOO.

RIGHT.

WELL, SEE YOU TOMOR-ROW, THEN.

PASA (FWOOSH)

RIKA.

INSTEAD OF PUTTING ON PAJAMAS, WHY DON'T WE SLEEP IN OUR CLOTHES TONIGHT?

THEN WE'LL BE READY TO GO IF SOMETHING HAPPENS.

I'VE SET UP TRAP AFTER TRAP AROUND THE SHRINE.

BUT YOU CAN'T BE TOO CARE-FUL!

...SA-TOKO?

THIS ISN'T LIKE THE OTHER NIGHTS, WHEN I WOULD STAY UP ALONE AND AFRAID.

ALL RIGHT, SIR.

OOISHI NEVER CAME...

...BUT THERE ARE TWO POLICE OFFICERS DOWN-STAIRS.

EVEN IF I END UP DEAD TOMOR-ROW...

...I CAN AT LEAST TRY TO PREVENT DESTINY FROM KILLING ME TONIGHT!

IT'S TIME.

ピ (BEEP)

PHOE-NIX TO ALL UNITS. NO GUNFIRE— IT WOULD LEAVE EVIDENCE.

WE CAN'T USE GAS EITHER. USE YOUR TASERS.

...YOU DON'T MIND IF WE REMOVE THE DETECTIVES?

GO AHEAD.

ANYONE WHO WAS AT FURUDE SHRINE TONIGHT WILL VANISH WITHOUT A TRACE.

THEY WILL BE "ABDUCTED BY DEMONS."

KUSU... CHUCKLE

KUSU...

THE MOON IS SO BEAUTIFUL THIS EVENING, AFTER ALL.

DO IT.

THERE ARE TWO POLICEMEN ON THE FIRST FLOOR.

THE LIGHTS ON THE SECOND FLOOR HAVE BEEN OFF FOR OVER AN HOUR.

MAJOR, HOW SHOULD WE PRO-CEED?

AND THAT WILL BE THE BEGINNING OF THE END.

CHA
(CHAK)

GARA
(SLIDE)

PAHYU
(WHOOSH)

!?

DO
(SHOONK)

....!
GUH!

GAH!

BACHI
(ZAP)

BACHI

BACHI

DOSSA
(THUD)

NO
PROB-
LEMS.

WE'VE
TAKEN
THE
FIRST
FLOOR.

We're on our way to R's room.

KU (GIGGLE)

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

KUSU KUSU

...THAT WAS DISAP-POINTINGLY EASY.

KUSU...

I WIN, RIKA-CHAN.

!

IT'S R...

はっ!!

...! WAIT !!

BAN (BAM)

ん?

She's escaped out the window !!

BA (LEAD)

PHOE-NIX 4 AND 5! R HAS FLED INTO THE MOUN-TAINS! STOP HER!

TCH!

ザッ

(DA DASH)

PHOENIX 4! COPY!

カチ

KACHI (CLICK)

THERE THEY ARE!

ドドド

WHAT WAS THAT SOUND!?

DAMMIT!

IT APPEARS TO BE SOME SORT OF FIRE-CRACKER!

IT WAS PROBABLY A TRAP THAT LET THEM KNOW WE WERE CLOSE TOO.

THIS IS SATOKO-CHAN'S DOING.

KUSU KUSU (CHUCKLE)

NOT BAD.

!

ARGH, YOU'RE PATHETIC!

ALL NEARBY TEAMS, TAKE EMERGENCY ACTION!

IF THEY ESCAPE INTO SOME-ONE'S HOME, IT'S ALL OVER!

IF YOU DON'T STOP THEM SOON, YOU WILL LOSE THEM.

THEY BOTH KNOW THEIR WAY AROUND THE AREA.

ZA ZSH

ZA

ZA

DASH
DASH

WH-WHAT ARE THEY!?
ARE THEY THAT "TOKYO" YOU WERE TELLING US ABOUT!?
PROB-ABLY!
JUST RUN! IF THEY CATCH US, THEY'LL KILL US!

WHERE SHOULD WE GO?

LET'S GO TO MII'S HOUSE, SIR!

WE'LL BE SAFE IN THE SECRET ROOM IN THEIR BASEMENT, AND WE'LL HAVE CONTACT WITH THE OUTSIDE, SIR!

GA (TRIP)

AH!

ZUZAZA (SKID)

RIKA !?

SATOKO, RUN! THEY'LL KILL YOU TOO!

GLOO (LOOOOM)

TAKE THIS!

HA (GASP)

BLIN (FLING)

BASAAA (FWOOSH)

THAT UNIFORM...

けほ
KEHO
(COUGH)

けほ
KEHO

THAT'S THE SAME UNIFORM OKONOGI WEARS!

SO THEY'RE FROM THE WILD DOGS.

AND THEIR LEADER, TAKANO, IS THE MASTERMIND BEHIND IT ALL!

IT'S JUST LIKE OOISHI SAID...

THE ONES WHO HAVE KILLED ME IN EVERY WORLD...

...ARE TAKANO AND THE WILD DOGS!!

...I CAN'T DIE.

BUT IF THEY KILL ME NOW...

...THEN I CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT HER IN THE NEXT WORLD.

IF I CAN TAKE THESE MEMORIES— THE MEMORIES THAT TAKANO IS THE MASTERMIND— WITH ME...

...THEN I'LL LOSE THE MEMORIES IT TOOK ME SO LONG TO FIND...

...BECAUSE I NEVER KEEP ANY OF THE MEMORIES FROM RIGHT BEFORE MY DEATH...

SO...

...I HAVE TO SURVIVE!

...TO TAKE THESE MEMORIES WITH ME...

JAKI (CLICK)

!!?

SIR, CREEP

AT THIS RATE...

WHAT DO I DO?

BA
(BAM)

RIKA, RUN!!

I'LL BE THE DECOY!

SATOKO!?

WHAT ARE YOU SAYING!?

IF YOU DO THAT, YOU'LL—

...WILL YOU DIE WITH SATOKO?

THEN...

IF I CAN'T KEEP THESE MEMORIES, THEN MY DEATH WILL BE IN VAIN!

IF I DON'T SURVIVE THIS, I'LL LOSE THESE IMPORTANT MEMORIES.

IN THAT CASE...

...AND RUN AWAY FROM HERE.

...I SHOULD ABANDON SATOKO...

...SO...

ZwR SHFF

I CAN'T DIE HERE.

THAT'S RIGHT.

RI...

...KA...

EVEN SO...

...THERE'S NO POINT TO LIVING ON IN A WORLD WITHOUT SATOKO!

RIKA!

I TOLD YOU TO RUN!

SIR (BEEP)

SIR!

JIRI

.....!

THEY'RE NOT SHOOTING.

SO THEY WANT TO CAPTURE ME AND THEN KILL ME?

...IS AS THIN AND BREAK-ABLE AS A GOLDFISH SCOOPER !!!

I KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND WHAT YOU'RE UP TO, BUT I CHOOSE NOT TO RUN.

HMPH.

I'M SUCH AN IDIOT.

BUT...

...I WON'T RUN!

BE-CAUSE I KNOW THAT DES-TINY...

YOU GOT THAT RIGHT, RIKA-CHAN!

ZUZAZAZAZA (SKIIIID)

VICTIM

DO (WHAM)

UGAAH!

KEI...

!!

NWAH !?

DŌ (WHAM)

BACHI (ZAP)

BACHI

BACHI

SHION! GET THESE GUYS TOO!

YOU GOT IT!

YOU OKAY, RIKA-CHAN? SATOKO?

EVERY-ONE...!

LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE BOTH ALL RIGHT.

EH?

IT'S A GOOD THING WE WERE ON THE LOOKOUT!

I'M GLAD WE KEPT WAITING.

BUT MAN, THAT WAS CLOSE.

ON OUR WAY OUT...

...WE SPOTTED SOME REALLY SUSPI-CIOUS PEOPLE.

NO.

SO YOU DIDN'T ALL GO HOME?

THEY WERE WATCHING THE SHRINE INTENTLY...

WHEN WE HEARD THE FIRE-CRACKERS GO OFF, WE CAME THIS WAY.

SO WE DECIDED TO WATCH THEM.

THEY DID ALL THAT?

YOU SAVED US!

THANK YOU, SIRS!

CHAPTER 23: STOPPED TIME

WHAT SHOULD WE DO NOW?

ANYWAY, IF WE STAY HERE, IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE WE RUN INTO REINFORCE-MENTS.

I SEE. THE UNDER-GROUND SAIGUDEN ...

WE WERE THINKING OF ESCAPING TO THE SECRET ROOM IN THE BASEMENT AT MION-SAN'S HOUSE.

WE'LL BE ABLE TO OUTSMART 'EM!

GOOD IDEA. THAT PLACE HAS A TON OF SECRET PASSAGES.

!

BA STURN

THEN LET'S HURRY! THEY'RE COMING AFTER US!

KIK!!
(SCREE)

BAN
(BAM

BAN

WILD DOGS...

SIX OF THEM...!

ZA (ZSH)

!?

IF WE ALL RUN, THEY COULD PICK OFF THE SLOW ONES!

WAIT!

WE HAVE TO HURRY, SIRS!

BUT THERE ARE SIX OF US TOO!

WE'LL GO AT 'EM WITH ALL WE'VE GOT, KNOCK 'EM OUT, AND TAKE THEIR CAR!

OH-HO-HO-HO! THAT'S A BRILLIANT IDEA!

MII! CAN YOU DRIVE, SIR?

HEH HEH HEH. JUST LEAVE IT TO ME!

IT'S OKAY, RIKA-CHAN.

SU (55K)

IF ANY-BODY CAN DO THIS, WE CAN!

YES, SIR!

GYU (CLENCH)

...ALL RIGHT.

POKI (CRAK)

NOW WE'VE GOT A PLAN. LET'S DO IT!!

DA (DASH)

GOOOO. (WHOOSH)

GO
(FWAM)

DO
(WHUMP)

ZA
(ZSH)

RENA! WATCH OUT—

!

GOOO (WHOOSH)

TA (TMP)

ZUN
(WHOOM)
DOCHA
(SPLAT)
ZA
(ZSH)

HEY, COME ON, RENA.

WHEN YOU'RE IN A FIGHT, YOU GOTTA WATCH YOUR BACK!

I'LL LET YOU TAKE CARE OF THAT, KEIICHI-KUN.

I'M COUNT-ING ON YOU!

KYU (YANK)

WHEW.

HYU (SWISH)

DOSA (THUD)

BACHIN (ZAP)

NOW I REALLY WANT TO KNOW WHAT YOU WERE LIKE IN IBARAKI, RENA-SAN.

MEKYA THWACK

YOU ARE WAY TOO EAGER TO HIT PEOPLE. YOU COULD SHOW A LITTLE HESITATION.

HEY!

SAYS THE ONE WHO DOESN'T HESITATE TO USE AN ILLEGALLY MODIFIED STUN GUN!

DOSA (THUD)

TAN (TMP)

GO (WHAM)

AFTER WHAT YOU TOLD US, RIKA-CHAN, I THOUGHT THEY'D BE REALLY SCARY.

BUT IT LOOKS LIKE EVEN KIDS LIKE US CAN BEAT 'EM!

GUH (WIPE)

HEH!

DO WHAT-EVER IT TAKES TO WIN.

ONEE'S CLUB IS LIKE A BOOT CAMP THAT TEACHES YOU NOT TO HOLD ANYTHING BACK.

IT'S ALL THANKS TO BEING IN MII-CHAN'S CLUB!

AND...

IF ANY ONE OF US HAD BEEN MISSING, WE COULDN'T HAVE DONE IT.

...WE ALL FOUGHT AS ONE.

RIGHT!

YEAH!

ITA (TMP)

TA

TA

TA

MUKU (SQUIRM)

NGH.

COME ON, GUYS! TIME TO BORROW THE CAR!

!

THIS TIME, WE CAN DO IT.

WE CAN DO THIS.

.....
RIKA...

ARE YOU WATCH-ING?

HA-NYU.

YOU'RE STILL RESIGNED TO MY FATE AS USUAL, AREN'T YOU?

I'M GOING TO TEAR DOWN MY DESTINY.

HEH.

AND I'M GOING TO DO IT RIGHT WHERE YOU CAN SEE!!!

EVERYONE SUDDENLY STOPPED...

WHAT?

WHAT HAPPENED ...?

IT'S LIKE TIME HAS BEEN FROZEN...

RIKA.

SU (SSK)

THE TIME HAS COME.

EHP

K... KEI-ICHI ...

... THAT THING FLOAT-ING IN FRONT OF YOUR CHEST ...

WHAT IS IT ...?

HUH? WHAT'S WHAT?

SO WHEN TIME STARTS MOVING AGAIN, KEIICHI-SAN WILL...

NO... BUT THAT'S...

HAS TIME STOPPED? IS THAT WHY?

WHY IS THAT BULLET FLOATING ...?

WHY...?

WHAT... ...IS THAT ...?

...HUH?

KEIICHI-SAN WILL DIE!

B...

THOSE GUYS ARE BEHIND US.

SO WHY ...?

...BUT WHO SHOT IT!?

HA (GASP)

LOOK! OVER THERE!

IT CAME FROM THE VAN!

TAKANO
...!!

SHE SHOT KEI-ICHI-KUN!?

IT WAS TAKANO-SAN!?

THERE WERE SEVEN!

THERE WEREN'T SIX IN THE CAR.

I SEE.

K... KEI-CHAN!

CAN YOU TWIST AROUND SOMEHOW AND DODGE THE BULLET!?

DON'T BE STU-PID!

HOW AM I SUP-POSED TO MOVE WHEN EVERY-THING'S STOPPED !?

SO IF YOU CAN TWIST YOUR CHEST TO THE RIGHT WHEN TIME STARTS AGAIN...

IT'S LIKE SIX INCHES AWAY.

THERE'S NO WAY.

DON'T GIVE UP, KEI-CHAN!

TH...

...THERE HAS TO BE A WAY!

KEI-ICHI ...

HOW CAN WE SAVE KEIICHI FROM CERTAIN DEATH!?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO DO.

HA HA HA.

...HA.

TAKANO-SAN'S RIGHT THERE. TAKE HER DOWN...

...AND TAKE THE CAR. DON'T THINK ABOUT ANYTHING ELSE.

...JUST GIVE UP ON ME.

IT'S OVER.

THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO NOW.

WHEN TIME STARTS MOVING AGAIN, I'M GOING TO DIE.

SO GUYS ...

.....

NO...

I DON'T WANT A WORLD LIKE THAT!

WE CAN'T LET YOU DIE, KEIICHI!

I DON'T BE-LIEVE IT!

YOU CAN'T JUST DIE ON US...!

SHE'S RIGHT!

WE HAVE TO FOCUS ON BEATING THE ENEMY IN FRONT OF US.

STOP IT, MII-CHAN.

WE HAVE TO GO!

THAT'S WHAT KEIICHI-KUN WANTS!

GUYS...

...TAKE CARE OF RIKA-CHAN FOR ME.

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT, RENA.

THAT'S WHY HE NEVER SHOWED UP.

THEN GET OUT OF HERE AND CALL COACH IRIE.

THEY'VE PROBABLY ALREADY KILLED OOISHI-SAN.

I MAY BE ABOUT TO DIE...

...BUT I WANT YOU ALL TO KEEP LIVING!

NO MATTER WHAT!

HA-NYU!

IS THIS DES-TINY?

IS THIS MY UN-AVOID-ABLE FATE!?

IT'S ALL RIGHT, RIKA.

YOU CAN FORGET.

YOU CAN FORGET ALL ABOUT THIS.

...RIKA-CHAN.

SORRY TO DO THIS TO YOU AT THE LAST SECOND.

AFTER ALL MY BIG TALK ABOUT OVER-TURNING DESTINY...

...I'M THE FIRST ONE OUT.

KEI-
ICHI
...!!

HE-H

KU
(GIGGLE)

KU

KU

KUSU
(CHUCKLE)

KUSU

KUSU

HAVE YOU FIN-ISHED YOUR GOOD-BYES?

KUSU CHUCKLE

KUSU

KUSU

TA-KANO ...!

ZOKU (CHILL)

DON'T THINK YOU'VE BEATEN US!

TA-KANO-SAN!

...YOUR LIFE FLASH BEFORE YOUR EYES.

WHY?

WHY...?

...I COULD DO IT THIS TIME.

I WAS SO SURE...

TAKANO TO HQ.

SHE'S OURS.

...YES.

I'LL NEED WATER TO CLEAN UP THE BLOOD AND FIVE BODY BAGS...

WHY DID IT TURN OUT THIS WAY?

SO WHY?

ONE FOR EVERYONE BUT R.

I'M SO SORRY.

THIS IS JUST A PART OF THE PLAN.

...IS TAKANO REALLY...

...GOING TO KILL ALL OF THEM!?

KO (THINK)

CHAPTER 24: DEMISE

YOU'VE GOTTA BE KID-DING ME!

JUST A—

MION ...!

ONEE!

STOP!

DON'T SHOOT MII-CHAN !!

I HAVE TO.

MION-CHAN IS THE LEADER OF YOUR LITTLE CLUB.

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

SHE HAS TO GO FIRST.

DON'T YOU AGREE?

KUSU

KUSU

KUSU

N-
NO...

D...

...
DON'T
—

PAKAN
(BANG)

BICHA
SPLITCH)

PIKLUN

PIKLUN
CTWITCH!

PIKLUN

NOOOOO!

ONEE!!

I'VE FINALLY...

...FIGURED IT OUT.

DIDN'T YOU!!?

YOU KILLED SATO-SHI-KUN!

UNFOR-TUNATELY...

...I DON'T WANT YOU TO BRING ME ANY-THING BACK FROM HELL.

KUSU (CHUCKLE) KUSU

しすしす

SO I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU.

CHAK (CLICK)

ナイフ

PAKAN
(BANG)

DO
(THUD)

K. (GLARE)

TA-KANO-SAN!

STOP IT! STOP IT!

AAAAH! NOOO!

YOU WERE BEHIND THE ENTIRE SERIES OF MYSTERIOUS DEATHS, WEREN'T YOU?

WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE? SOME KIND OF AGENT OF OYASHIRO-SAMA?

AGENT? OH, NO.

I AM GOING TO BE OYASHIRO-SAMA HERSELF.

AH HA HA HA! I DON'T THINK SO!

YOU CAN PRETEND TO BE OYASHIRO-SAMA AS MUCH AS YOU LIKE, TAKANO-SAN.

BUT THAT'S ALL IT WILL EVER BE— PRETEND.

YOU COULD NEVER BE OYASHIRO-SAMA.

YES, I COULD.

I WILL BE!

ムムム
MU MU MU

NO, YOU WON'T.

KUSU KUSU CHUCKLE

BECAUSE OYASHIRO-SAMA...

... ALREADY EXISTS.

PAKAN BANG

RENA ...!

NOW, THEN.

KURU (WHIR)

LAST IS YOUR TURN, SATOKO-CHAN.

!

BIKU (WINCE)

...EEK!

YOU WERE A LIVING RESEARCH SPECI-MEN...

...SO I DON'T NECES-SARILY HAVE TO KILL YOU.

BUT IF YOU DO SURVIVE, THEN MEN FROM TOKYO WILL MOST LIKELY OPEN UP YOUR SKULL WITH YOU STILL LIVING INSIDE IT.

SO I'LL LET YOU CHOOSE. WHICH WOULD YOU PREFER?

H-HOW...

...CAN YOU POSSIBLY EXPECT ME TO MAKE A DECISION LIKE THAT!?

FUU (SIGH)

GOOD POINT.

ALL RIGHT, THEN. HERE'S A POP QUIZ.

BROCCOLI OR CAULI-FLOWER:

WHICH ONE IS GREEN?

NO!
BROC-COLI!
PURU (TREMBLE)
PURU
PURU
...
CA—

KUSU

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

THAT'S RIGHT.

SATOKO ...!!!

PAKAN (BANG)

THE MOON REALLY IS BEAUTIFUL TONIGHT.

HEH!

HEH HEH HEH

HEH!

HEH!

DON'T YOU AGREE?

LOOK.

YES, THAT'S RIGHT.

THE QUEEN CARRIER'S DEAD BODY IS THE KEY TO THIS ENTIRE OPERATION, AFTER ALL.

AND NOW...

...YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME, RIGHT?

YOU WILL BE THE PERIOD THAT DOTS THE END OF THE LEGEND OF ONIGAFUCHI VILLAGE.

THAT'S HOW SHE WANTS TO KILL ME.

TAKANO ADORES THE TRUE ONIGAFUCHI COTTON DRIFTING.

I SEE...

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

KUSU

I SEE YOU'VE GUESSED...

...HOW YOU ARE GOING TO DIE.

SU (SSK)

WELL, I'LL AT LEAST PUT YOU TO SLEEP SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO SUFFER.

TAKANO, WAIT!

OH?

IF YOU'RE GOING TO KILL ME...

ARE YOU GOING TO BEG ME TO SPARE YOU?

...THEN LET ME STAY AWAKE FOR IT.

WHY WOULD YOU WANT THAT?

PIKU (TWITCH)

IT REALLY HURTS TO HAVE YOUR BELLY SPLIT OPEN WHILE YOU'RE ALIVE.

DON'T YOU WANT TO DIE AN EASY DEATH?

AND THE NEXT TIME I MEET YOU...

IT'S TO STOP ME FROM FORGET-TING.

YOU WILL TEAR ME APART.

I WILL CARVE THE MEMORY INTO MY SOUL.

KUH!

AH HA!

HA!

HA!

HA!

HA!

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE PLOTTING...

...I'LL REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE MY ENEMY!

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

I'LL GIVE YOU EXACTLY WHAT YOU WANT.

KUSU

KUSU

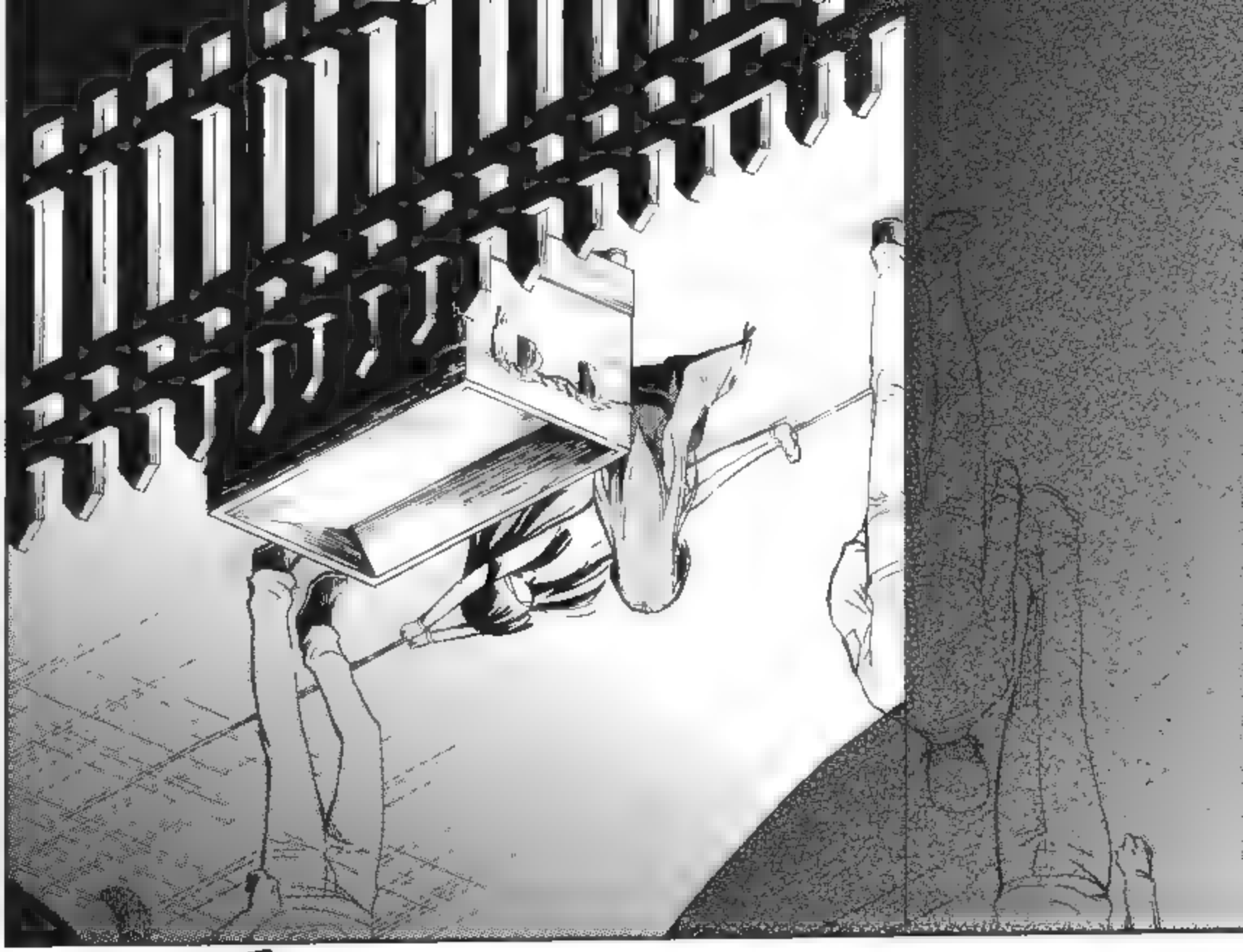
...BUT ALL RIGHT.

ミシ
MISHI
(TAUT)

チャ
CHA
(CHAK)

ギュッ
GYUU
(TUUUG)

ギチ
GICHI
(TIGHT)


HARA
(GLUTTER)
BA
(FLAP)
JA
(SLASH)

AND EVEN IF I END UP ONLY BEING ABLE TO REPEAT THE DAY OF THE COTTON DRIFTING...

I WON'T GIVE UP. I'LL KEEP REPEATING THE WORLDS.

I WON'T...

...GIVE IN.

...IF THAT'S HOW LONG MY LIFE IS, I'LL LIVE IT TO THE FULLEST!

AND I WILL CLEAR THE WAY TO THE REST OF MY LIFE!

...NGH.

RIKA...

RIKA...

WE FAILED AGAIN...

PORO

PORO (DRIP)

PORO

AGAIN ... AGAIN ...!

HANYU ...

...I KNEW IT.

YOU WERE ONLY PRETENDING TO BE A COLD, UNFEELING OBSERVER.

I WANTED TO GO TOO...

HAAAAAAA

I WANTED TO GO TO THE FUTURE AND HAVE FUN WITH EVERYONE TOO.

...UUNH!

THANK YOU, HANYU ...

KOTSU (CLACK)

...I'LL NEVER FORGET ANYTHING THAT HAPPENED IN THIS WORLD...!

YOU DREAMED OF THE FUTURE, JUST LIKE ME.

YOUR HOPES HAVE BEEN CRUSHED AGAIN AND AGAIN.

AND YOUR HEART'S BEEN BROKEN SO MANY TIMES IT MADE YOU AFRAID TO EXPECT ANYTHING...

GU (CLENCH)

...IF...

...YOU FORGET ABOUT THIS IN THE NEXT WORLD...

...THEN I'LL TELL YOU!

I...

TAKA-
NO...

ト.
SU
(55K)

...WILL
NOT
FORGET
...

I...

DOSHU (SHOONK)

...THIS PAIN...

GH!

...AND YOU, TAKA-NO.

...UNTIL THE SECOND I DIE, I WILL ENGRAVE IT ALL INTO MY SOUL.

HA!

HA!

AH HA!

HA!

HA!

HA!

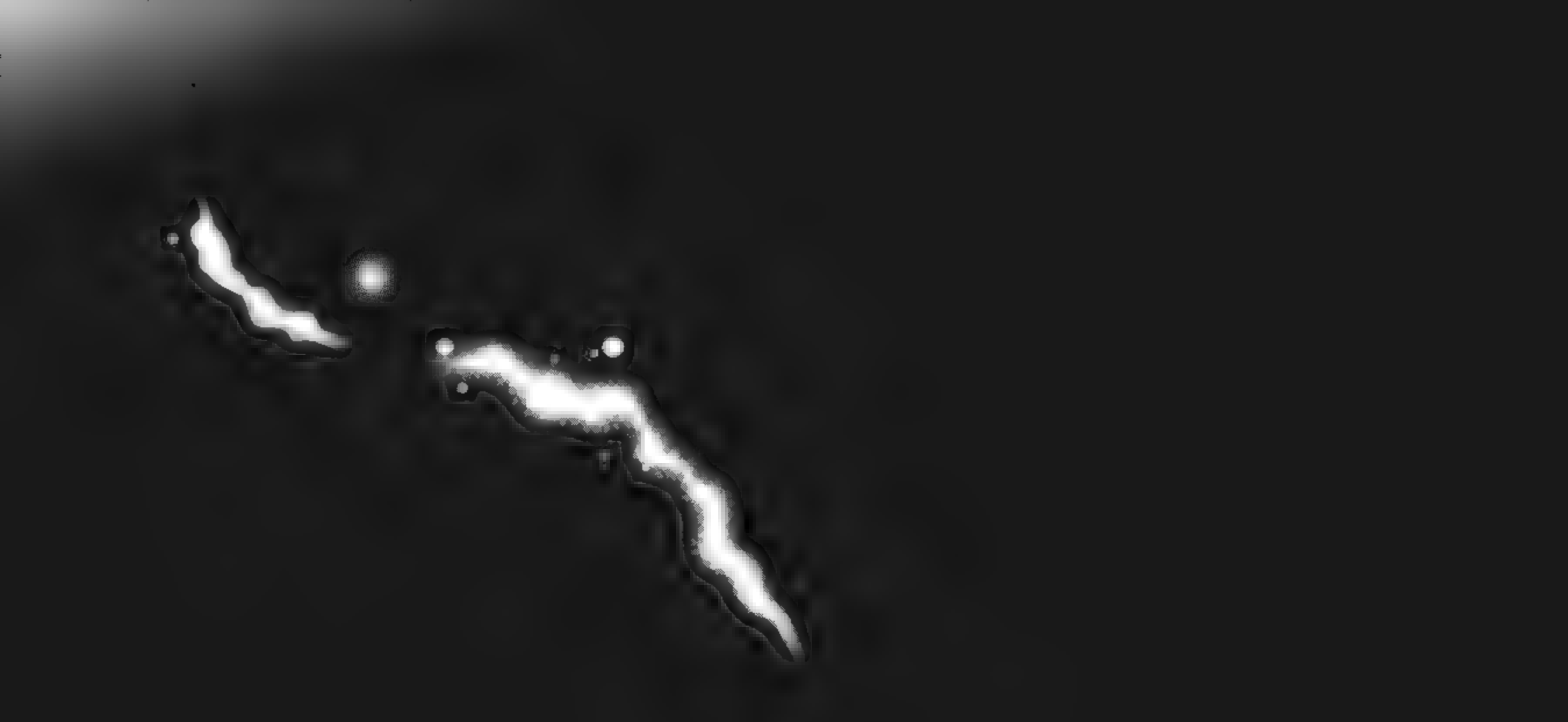
...TO LET THIS PAIN BEAT ME!!!

GUSSHU (GOOSH)

ZUBO (PLUNGE)

I REFUSE...!!!

GUI (YANK)



THAT'S ...

I SEE.

I DIED...

EH?

WE WERE SO CLOSE...!

DAMMIT!

MY FRIENDS ...

I'M SO SORRY, RIKA!

YOU WERE SO BRAVE TO TELL US EVERY-THING... BUT WE COULDN'T SAVE YOU.

WE COULDN'T MAKE A MIRACLE HAPPEN AFTER ALL.

WE ALL DID EVERYTHING WE COULD HAVE, AND IT STILL DIDN'T WORK.

WE CAN'T HELP THAT...

NO.

LITTLE GIRL WHOSE NAME I DON'T KNOW?

...EH?

ISN'T THAT RIGHT?

YOU'RE WRONG, RIKA-CHAN.

?

THE REASON THERE WAS NO MIRACLE IS THAT THERE WAS SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T BELIEVE.

DID YOU BELIEVE...

...THAT WE COULD BEAT DESTINY?

DID YOU BELIEVE?

WH...

あ

uu...

あう

UHH. UHH!

...WHAT WOULD HAVE CHANGED IF I HAD BELIEVED?

AND YOU SAY THAT THE FAITH OF A HELPLESS GIRL LIKE ME WOULD HAVE MADE A MIRACLE, SIR?

I'M A POWERLESS CREATURE, SIR. I CAN'T DO ANYTHING.

YEAH.

IT WOULD HAVE.

THAT'S RIGHT.

WE HAD SIX, AND THEY HAD SEVEN.

IF YOU HAD BELIEVED ...

...THAT'S ALL IT WOULD HAVE TAKEN FOR US TO HAVE SEVEN HEARTS ON OUR SIDE.

EVEN IF YOU COULDN'T HAVE TOUCHED US OR SPOKEN TO US...

...IF YOU'D HAD THE FAITH TO BELIEVE, WE COULD HAVE MADE A MIRACLE.

EVERY-ONE...

.....!

...THE COURAGE TO FIGHT AGAINST DESTINY.

YOU NEEDED THE COURAGE TOO. TO FIGHT THE SADNESS AND THE PAIN...

I'M... NOT ONE OF YOU!

NO...

ARE YOU SAYING IT'S MY FAULT, SIR!?

AND BECAUSE YOU DIDN'T BELIEVE...

EVERY-ONE WHO SEES ME CALLS ME A MONSTER, SIR.

I DON'T EVER WANT TO BE CALLED A MONSTER AGAIN!

...WE ALL FAILED TO MAKE IT TO THE WORLD WE HOPED FOR...!

I... AM?

IF YOU'VE BEEN WITH US ALL THIS TIME...

HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT !!?

SO LET'S GO.

TO-GETH-ER.

...THEN YOU'RE ALREADY ONE OF US.

THOSE HORNS HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ANYTHING.

MONSTERS ARE MADE BY WHAT'S IN A PERSON'S HEART, NOT WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE.

R... RIKA...

SU (SSK)

LET'S GO, HANYU.

YOU BELIEVE TOO.

BELIEVE IN THE FUTURE WE LONG FOR.

IF YOU DO, WE CAN MAKE A MIRACLE.

WE CAN GET THERE.

What kind of world waits outside the well?
Is it worth the suffering that I must pay to find out?

What kind of world waits outside the well?
Is it alluring enough to risk falling again and again to get there?

What kind of world waits outside the well?
I will try to find out and enjoy the pain of my falls.

After all of that, it's sure to be a wonderful world.
Even if it turns out to be the bottom of the well.

The resolve to see the world outside of the well
is the key to a new world.
Whether I escape the well or not,
I know I'll make it to a new world...

Frederica Bernkastel

IN THE NEXT WORLD, WE WILL MAKE A MIRACLE HAPPEN.

WE HAVE CONFIRMED THE DEATH OF THE QUEEN CARRIER R.
PRIME MINIS-TER.

MR. IRIE, THE ALLEGED RINGLEADER, HAS POISONED HIMSELF. WE CAN'T STOP THE OUT-BREAK.

NOW, WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS ...

...THE DISEASE WILL ACTIVATE IN EVERY ONE OF THE VILLAGERS.

GATA CLATTER

MINIS-TER.

YOUR ORDERS?

POSO (MUTTERING)

...TO COVER UP RESEARCH THAT MUST NOT BE DISCOV-ERED...

...WE MUST USE A METHOD THAT WON'T BE DISCOV-ERED...

...VERY WELL.

PLEASE DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM IMMEDI-ATELY.

YES, SIR!

WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR APPROVAL!

I hereby approve the use of Emergency Manual 34.

June 23, 1983
Prime Minister XXXX
Minister of Defense XXXX

...WE WILL NOW DESTROY HINAMI-ZAWA.

LATE ON THE NIGHT OF JUNE 23.

HINAMI-ZAWA.

GARA (RATTLE)

YES? WHAT IS IT?

YOU NEED TO EVACU-ATE IMMEDI-ATELY!

EH?

DON (BAM)

DON

DON

...POISON-
OUS
GAS IS
POURING
OUT
OF THE
GROUND
!!

ALL
OVER
HINAMI-
ZAWA...

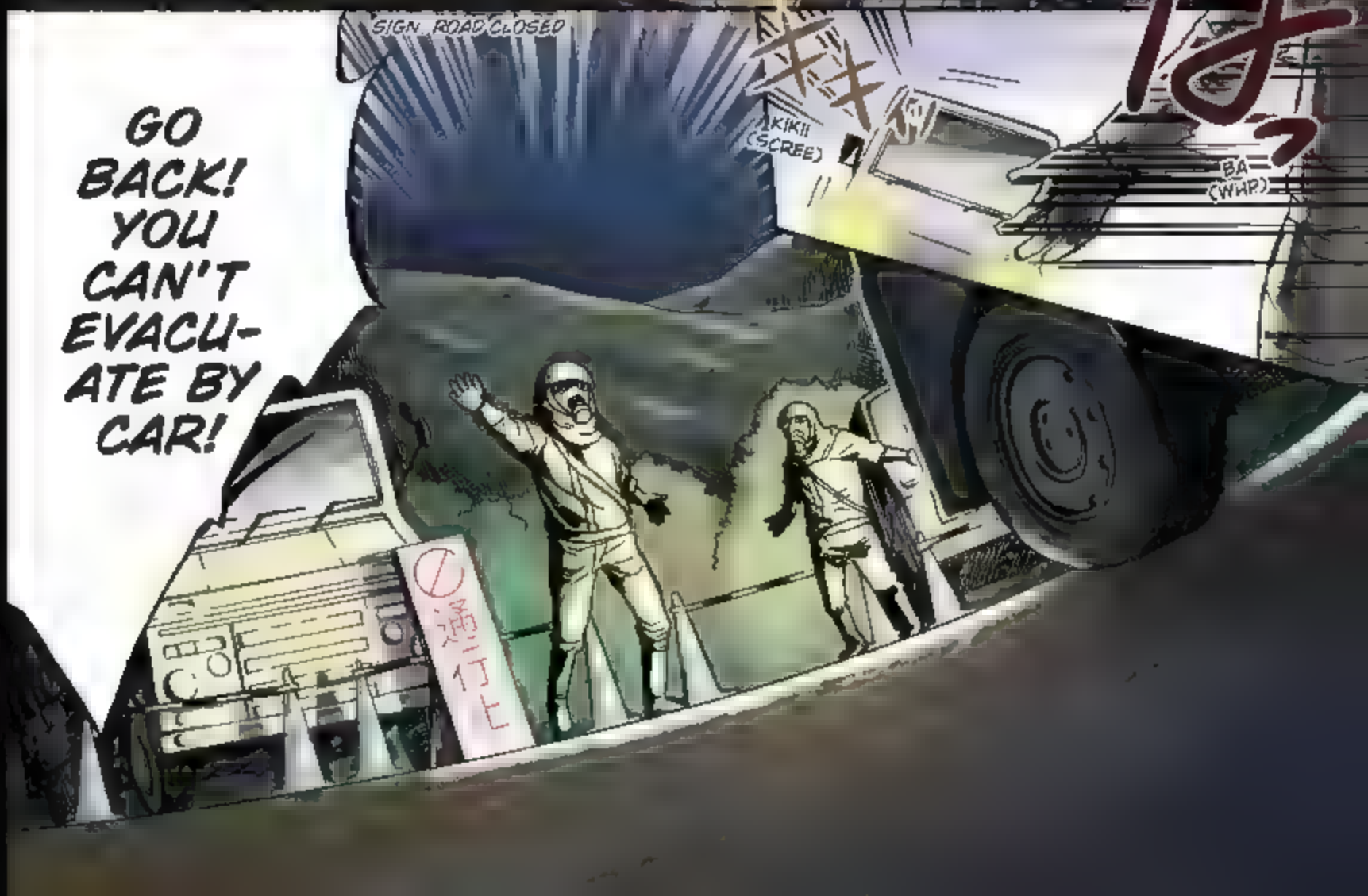
FINAL CHAPTER:
OPERATION: APOCALYPSE

Emergency Manual 34

If the chief party responsible determines a situation to be unmanageable, then in order to maintain confidentiality and prevent discovery by outside parties, the Irie Institute must resort to this final solution.

The final solution comprises the following:

- Disposal of all carriers of latent level two or above.
- Complete destruction of all evidence within Institute facilities.
- Concealment of any and all measures taken to achieve this end.



The final solution will be carried out in the following manner:

- Simulate a gas disaster and stop all traffic.

The traffic team will disguise themselves as police officers and cut off the Hinamizawa region to outsiders. At that time, they will act as if there is a natural gas disaster.

I BET THE LINE'S BEEN CUT BECAUSE OF THE GAS.

WHAT SHOULD WE DO? I CAN'T GET THROUGH.

TSUUUU

TSUUUU (BOOOOP)

GACHAN (CLICK)

WELL, THERE'S NO HELPING IT, DEAR. LET'S GO TO THE SHELTER.

ZAAAA (KSHHH)

BUT I DIDN'T THINK IT'D AFFECT THE TV AND THE RADIO TOO...

AH...

RIGHT.

BATA (STOMP)

BATA

I DOUBT YOU CAN CONTACT ANYONE WITH THAT WIRELESS.

YOU TOO, GRAND-PA! HURRY!

...THIS IS JUST LIKE THE SOUND IT MADE WHEN THE AMERICANS JAMMED OUR RADIOS DURING THE WAR.

ZAAAA

■ Cut off all means of communication.

The comm team will cut off all means of communication with the outside world from the Hinamizawa region, including all wired and wireless devices.

ZORO

ZORO (MARCH)

ATTENTION EVERYONE! TO EXPEDITE THE EVACUATION PROCESS, WE CAN'T LET YOU BRING ANYTHING WITH YOU!

ALL HAND BAG-GAGE IS PROHIB-ITED!

PLEASE BRING ONLY CASH, BANK-BOOKS, AND SIGNATURE SEALS!

...IF THIS IS A NATURAL DISASTER, THEN WHY ARE ALL THE SOLDIERS CARRYING GUNS?

TO PROTECT YOUR HOMES AFTER YOU'VE EVACU-ATED...

...AND TO STOP ANY RIOTERS WHO MAY TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE DISASTER TO LOOT IN THE SHOPPING DISTRICT.

NO ONE IN HINAMIZAWA WOULD DO THAT...

OYASHIRO-SAMA IS ANGRY BECAUSE SOMEONE KILLED RIKA-CHAMA LAST NIGHT.

OHHH ...

OYASHIRO-SAMA, OYASHIRO-SAMA, PLEASE CALM YOUR WRATH.

THAT'S RIGHT.

THAT'S WHY HELL'S POT HAS BEEN OPENED AND THE MIASMA IS POURING OUT OF ONIGAFUCHI.

LET ME DIE IN THE VILLAGE!!

THERE ARE TOO MANY OF US! YOU CAN'T SAVE US ALL!

DON'T WORRY.

THEY'RE SENDING A TRANSPORT HELICOPTER AND A BUS EQUIPPED TO DEAL WITH THE GAS.

WE WILL SAVE YOU ALL!!

YOU'RE RIGHT.

SEE, GRANDMA? HE SAYS WE'LL BE FINE.

LET'S JUST DO AS HE SAYS AND GO TO THE SHELTER.

PLEASE HURRY! LET US KNOW IF ANYONE HAS DIFFICULTY WALKING! A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM WILL ASSIST YOU!

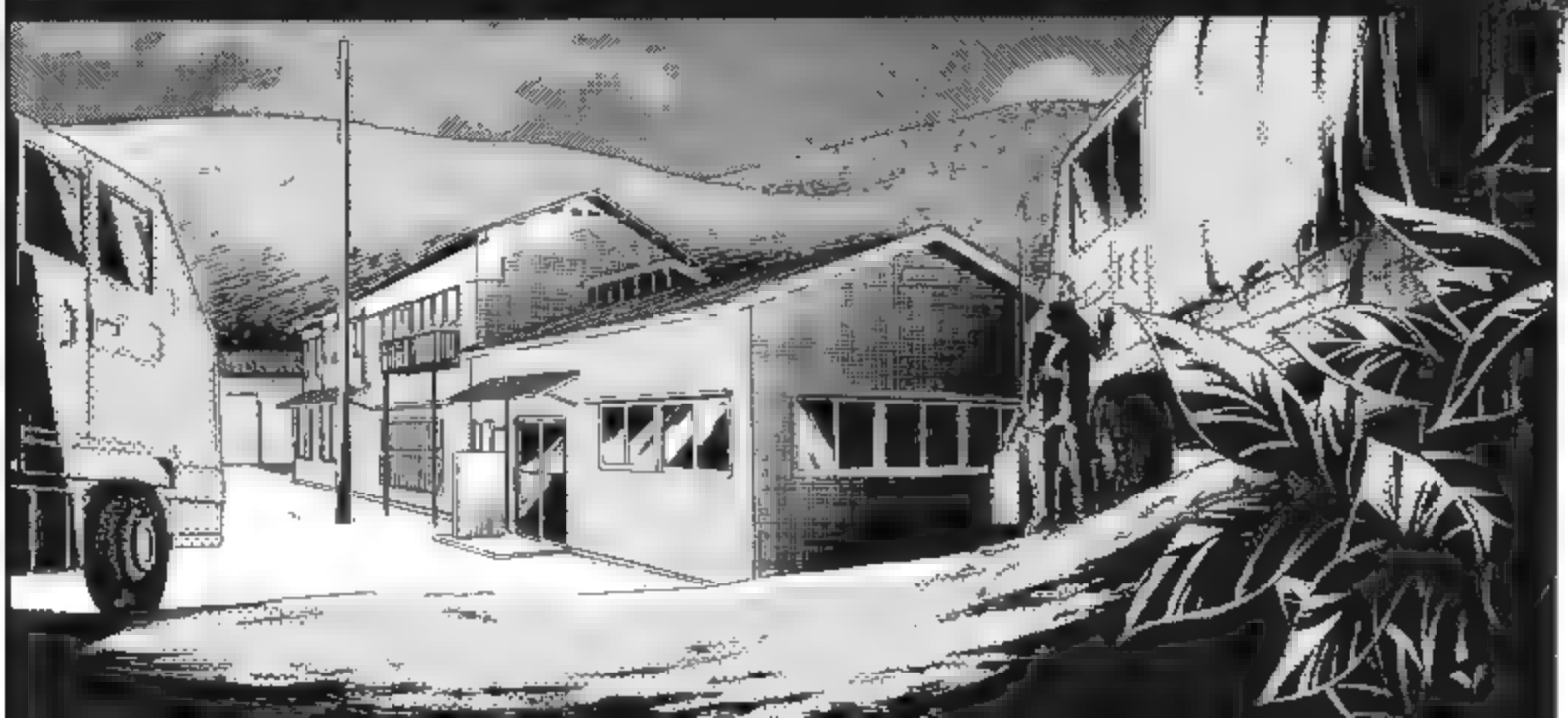
TEAM LEADERS! AS SOON AS YOU'VE TAKEN ROLL CALL, CONTACT SOMEONE FROM THE VILLAGE COUN-CIL!

EVACU-ATE THE VILLAGE, JUST LIKE WE DO IN ALL OUR NATURAL DISASTER DRILLS!

■ Gather all carriers of the disease.

The main body of the confidentiality team is to gather all potential carriers of the disease into the Hinamizawa region's natural disaster shelters.

Personal belongings must be strictly prohibited, as they will hinder the assembly process. However, to prevent suspicion, you may allow villagers to bring bankbooks, signature seals, and other such valuables.



THIS WAY, EVERY-ONE.

TO BE EXTRA SAFE, WE WILL SEAL THE WINDOWS WITH TAPE.

WE'RE VERY SORRY, BUT WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR FULL COOPERATION!

ZAWA (MURMUR)

ZAWA

PLEASE CLOSE ALL WINDOWS IN THE UNLIKELY EVENT THAT THE GAS COMES THIS WAY.

ALL RIGHT, EVERYONE! YOUNG PEOPLE, TAKE THE LEAD! HELP THEM!

PETA (STICK)

B.III (VREEE)

YEAH!

...This is HQ. Copy.

THEN IT'S FINALLY TIME.

TIME FOR THE FIVE-YEAR CURSE TO STOP BEING CALLED A SERIES OF MURDERS AND BE ELEVATED TO THE STATUS OF TRUE DIVINE PUNISHMENT.

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

KUSU

MAJOR.

THE PLATOONS HAVE COMPLETED THEIR ROLL CALLS.

ALL THE VIL-LAGERS HAVE BEEN ASSEM-BLED.

...I SEE.

A MOMENT OF PRAYER FOR THE VICTIMS.

...COM-MANDER TO ALL TEAMS.

DO IT.

HAVE IT YOUR WAY.

MAJOR, PLEASE GIVE US A MINUTE.

SL SSK

OUR FATHER, WHO ART IN HEAVEN.

PLEASE GUIDE THESE INNOCENT SOULS.

PLEASE ALLOW THEIR NOBLE SACRIFICE TO PUT AN END TO FURTHER SACRIFICE.

AND PLEASE, IF THOU WILT, FORGIVE US OF THIS GREAT SIN...

"...FOR NO MAN KNOWETH WHAT HOUR YOUR LORD DOTH COME.

"IF THE GOODMAN OF THE HOUSE HAD KNOWN IN WHAT WATCH THE THIEF WOULD COME, HE WOULD HAVE WATCHED.

"BE YE ALSO READY, LEST THE MASTER COME IN A DAY WHEN HIS SERVANTS LOOKETH NOT FOR HIM, AND THEY SHALL BE APPOINTED THEIR PORTION WITH THE UNFAITHFUL: THERE SHALL BE WEEPING AND GNASHING OF TEETH.

"AND THERE SHALL ARISE FALSE PROPHETS, CRYING WITH LOUD VOICES THAT HE IS COME. BELIEVE THEM NOT."

...IS THAT IT?

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

KUSU

THAT SOUNDS LIKE THE GOSPEL OF MATTHEW.

DOES IT?

IT WAS SOMETHING MY GRANDFATHER LOVED TO SAY.

...BECAUSE YOU NEVER KNOW WHEN YOU WILL BE CALLED UPON TO PAY FOR YOUR ACTIONS.

BUT HE THOUGHT IT MEANT THAT YOU SHOULD ALWAYS BE ON YOUR GUARD...

...FORGIVE MY SAYING SO, BUT I BELIEVE THAT THE LORD'S COMING WILL BE A TIME OF MERCY.

YES.

ARE YOU SAYING THIS IS THE DAY OF JUDG-MENT?

I THINK IT'S BLASPHEMOUS TO COMPARE IT TO A DAY LIKE TODAY.

YOU GO AHEAD AND LET GOD TEST YOU.

AS OF TODAY, I WILL BECOME ONE OF THE TESTERS.

...THAT CONCLUDES OUR MOMENT OF PRAYER.

...ALL TEAMS

...BEGIN THE PURGE...

47?!

NUWA (CROWD)

DADDY, I'M HOT!

YORO (STAGGER)

WITH SO MANY PEOPLE...

...I WISH THEY'D OPEN THE DOOR A LITTLE WIDER.

HAAH...

KORON SLUMP

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, GRANDPA?

GIVE ME YOUR HAND...

(HSOOHM) HYU

EX

PUSHUU (PSHHH)

...EH?

ARE YOU OKAY?

KORON

EX

AHH ...

AH ...

... EEK!

KORON

KORON

KORON

KORON

KAN! (CLANG!)

KORON (SLUMP)

PUSHHHH (PUSHHH)

WAAA

AAAAAH

KORON (SLUMP)

KORON

KORON

SIGN FACULTY ROOM

職員室

WHAT THE HELL IS THIS ...?

POISON GAS!?

FASTER!!

HURRY!

KORON

KORON

KORON

BIRIRI (RIIIP)

BAN (BAM)

WE HAVE VILLAG-ERS ESCAPING FROM THE FACULTY ROOM!

FOUR HAVE JUMPED OUT THE WINDOW!

PERMIS-SION TO OPEN FIRE!

DO (BLAM)

DO

DO

DO

DO

FIRE, FIRE, FIRE, FIRE, !!

■ Dispose of the latent carriers.

The main body of the confidentiality team is to quickly and thoroughly eliminate all latent carriers of the disease. Should any trouble arise during the process and it is deemed absolutely necessary to contain the situation, the team is permitted to open fire.

■ Search the village.

The confidentiality team is to perform a thorough search of the village and confirm that there are no survivors.

♪

Platoon Two to HQ. Purge complete. No escapees.

Platoon One to HQ. Purge complete. Four escapees have been shot.

♫

Platoon Three to HQ. Currently taking care of about a dozen escapees.

Platoon Four to HQ. Purge complete. No escapees.

Platoon Three to HQ. Thirteen escapees, all confirmed dead.
Purge complete.

■ Turn the situation over to the general defense force.

Allow the regular troops dispatched to the disaster to handle the rest. Take extreme care to prevent suspicion.

■ Pull everyone out.

Once the operation is complete, the confidentiality team is to leave the Hinamizawa region.

...YOU SEEM HAPPY.

YES. THIS IS THE BEST NIGHT OF MY LIFE.

I DOUBT YOU CAN HEAR IT.

THE PRAISES BEING SUNG AT THE BIRTH OF A NEW GOD.

...PRAISES, YOU SAY?

YES, PRAISES.

OYASHIRO-SAMA HAD VANISHED FROM HINAMI-ZAWA...

...BUT I HAVE ALLOWED THE VILLAGE TO TAKE BACK ITS DEITY.

A GOD IS FEARED BECAUSE HE CURSES...

...AND WORSHIPPED BECAUSE HE IS FEARED.

WHERE THERE IS NO CURSE, THERE IS NO GOD.

A CURSE IS PROOF OF A TRUE GOD.

WHEN THE WRATH OF OYA-SHIRO-SAMA IS IN-CURRED ...

...THE POT OF HELL OPENS, AND THE MIASMA SPILLS OUT.

THE PEOPLE CANNOT ESCAPE— THEY ALL PERISH.

...HAS JUST BECOME REALITY!!

AND THAT FINAL JUDG-MENT ...

WHAT WILL YOU LEAVE BEHIND WHEN YOU DIE?

WHEN YOUR FLESH HAS ROTTED OR BURNED AWAY AND YOUR BONES HAVE BEEN CRUSHED INTO SAND, WHAT WILL YOU HAVE LEFT BEHIND?

AND I AM THE ONE WHO BROUGHT THE CURSE!

THAT IS EXACTLY ...

...HOW OYASHIRO-SAMA HAS BEEN COM-PLETELY REVIVED!

WOR-SHIP ME!

SING MY PRAIS-ES!

I HAVE FINALLY...

...REACHED THE REALM OF GOD-HOOD!

AND FEAR ME!!!

PEOPLE WILL FEAR THE CURSE, HISTORY WILL TELL OF THE CURSE, AND I WILL BE REMEMBERED THROUGH ALL ETERNITY!

I HAVE LEFT BEHIND A CURSE!

I AM OYA-SHIRO-SAMA!

Higurashi
WHEN THEY CRY

MASSACRE ARC

FIN

くすっ

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

くすっ

KUSU

...WITH THAT,

THE STORY IN THIS FRAGMENT COMES TO AN END.

NOW RIKA HAS ALL THE ANSWERS SHE WAS LOOKING FOR.

...THERE'S NO GUARANTEE THAT THESE MEMORIES WILL CARRY OVER.

KUSU (CHUCKLE)

BUT ...

THIS PIECE HAS GIVEN YOU A NEAR COMPLETE PICTURE OF THE STRUCTURE OF THIS WORLD.

SO NOW, WHO NEEDS TO DO WHAT AND WHERE...

...TO MAKE SURE RIKA DOES NOT LOSE TO TAKANO? I JUST LOVE IMAGINING IT.

I'M SURE THE FRAGMENT RIKA IS ABOUT TO CREATE WILL SPARKLE MUCH MORE BRIGHTLY.

BUT I ONLY CREATED THOSE FRAGMENTS FOR MY OWN PERSONAL SATISFACTION.

I'M TOO EMBARRASSED TO SHOW THEM TO YOU.

1P

ア

FLAAAASH

THE NEXT FRAG-MENT HAS ALREADY BEGUN.

...TO KEEP THE LIFE SHE'S BEEN GIVEN IS TO STRIVE FOR BEAUTY.

BECAUSE SHE HAS LEARNED THAT STRUGGLING WITH ALL HER MIGHT...

WOULD YOU LIKE TO HAVE A LOOK?

A WORLD MADE OF OVERLAPPING SHEETS OF PAPER

ORIGINAL STORY, SUPERVISOR: RYUKISHI07

HELLO, I'M RYUKISHI07.

THIS VOLUME BRINGS US TO THE CONCLUSION OF THE "MASSACRE ARC" OF *HIGURASHI WHEN THEY CRY*.

THE "MASSACRE ARC" GIVES THE MOST ANSWERS OF ANY OF THE OTHER STORIES UP TO THIS POINT. AFTER READING THIS ARC, I THINK THAT ALL THE SCATTERED PUZZLE PIECES THAT YOU HAVE COLLECTED UP UNTIL NOW SHOULD FINALLY BE FITTING TOGETHER.

BEFITTING AN ARC ENTITLED "MASSACRE," THIS ONE ALSO FEATURES THE MOST CHARACTERS SO FAR. THERE IS SOMETHING THAT ONLY YOU READERS, WHO HAVE SEEN THE WORLD THROUGH THE VARIOUS PERSPECTIVES OF THE MAIN CHARACTERS, WILL BE ABLE TO SEE—SOMETHING THAT WILL HELP YOU FIND THE TRUTH. SOMETHING THAT MAY LOOK MERELY LIKE A LINE WHEN YOU SEE ONLY ONE PIECE OF PAPER, BUT WHEN YOU PUT THE MULTIPLE SHEETS OF PAPER ON TOP OF EACH OTHER, THEY FORM A PICTURE...MAYBE THE WORLD OF *HIGURASHI* IS A WORLD MADE UP OF INDIVIDUAL PIECES OF PAPER LAID ON TOP OF ONE ANOTHER.

I'M SORRY IT TOOK UNTIL THE LAST VOLUME TO SAY THIS, BUT HINASE MOMOYAMA-SENSEI, THANK YOU FOR ALL THE WONDERFUL ILLUSTRATIONS YOU DREW FOR THIS MANGA. YOU ALWAYS MADE THE WORLD OF *HIGURASHI* SO EXCITING WITH YOUR GREAT DRAWINGS, AND I ALWAYS LOOKED FORWARD TO READING YOUR ROUGH DRAFTS. I LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOUR FUTURE WORKS.

THE WORLD OF *HIGURASHI* WILL CONTINUE JUST A LITTLE LONGER. I HOPE YOU WILL STAY WITH ME UNTIL THE VERY END.

Thank you for reading this far. I remember playing the visual novel, and when I got to the terrible, terrible ending, the tears just wouldn't stop. And when Rika-chan refused to give up, seeing her fight against her hopeless fate...she was so heartbreaking and so glorious.

Like Rika-chan, I would never have been able to safely bring this manga to a close all on my own.

Ryukishi07-sama, Yatazakura-sama, Tokibi-sama, Tsubaki Naruse-sama, Nekozakura-sama, Kakumu-sama, BT-sama.

My editors Nakagawa-sama, Koizumi-sama.

And my assistants Ekuni-kun, Aoi Shouno-sama, Taruma-sama, Tsuchii-sensei, Hime-sama, Maruyama-sama, Mito-sama, Yuukarin, Motchii-sama, Yamao-sama, Yoneda-sama.....

And my friends, family, the Nakagawa-sama who's not my editor (hee),

and all of you who read this. It's thanks to you. I've gotten so much help from all of you, I can never thank you enough.

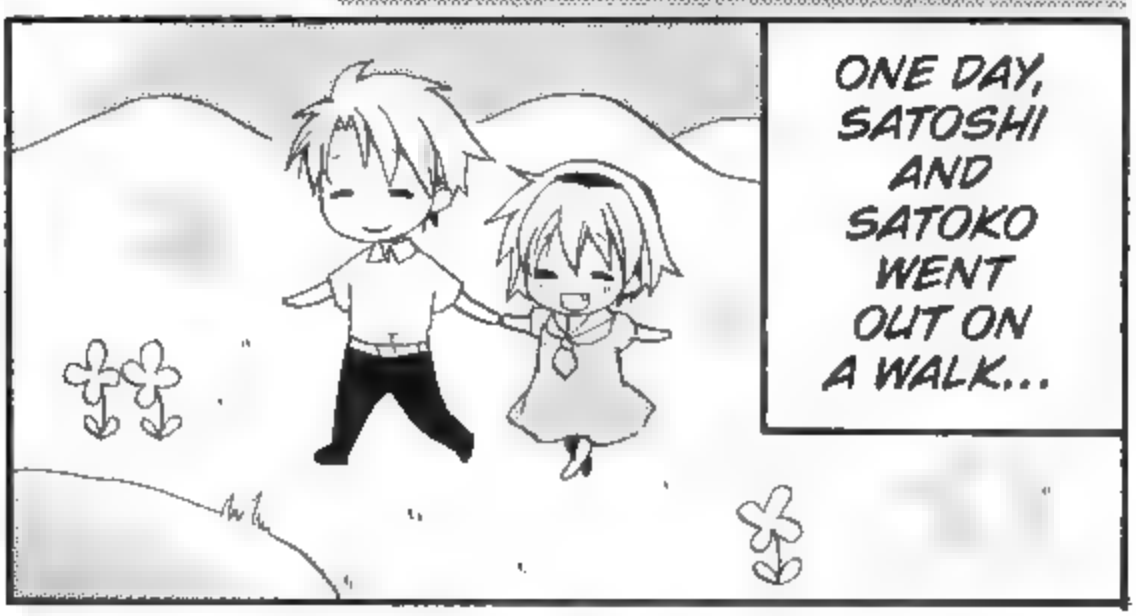
Thank you, thank you, thank you so much!!!

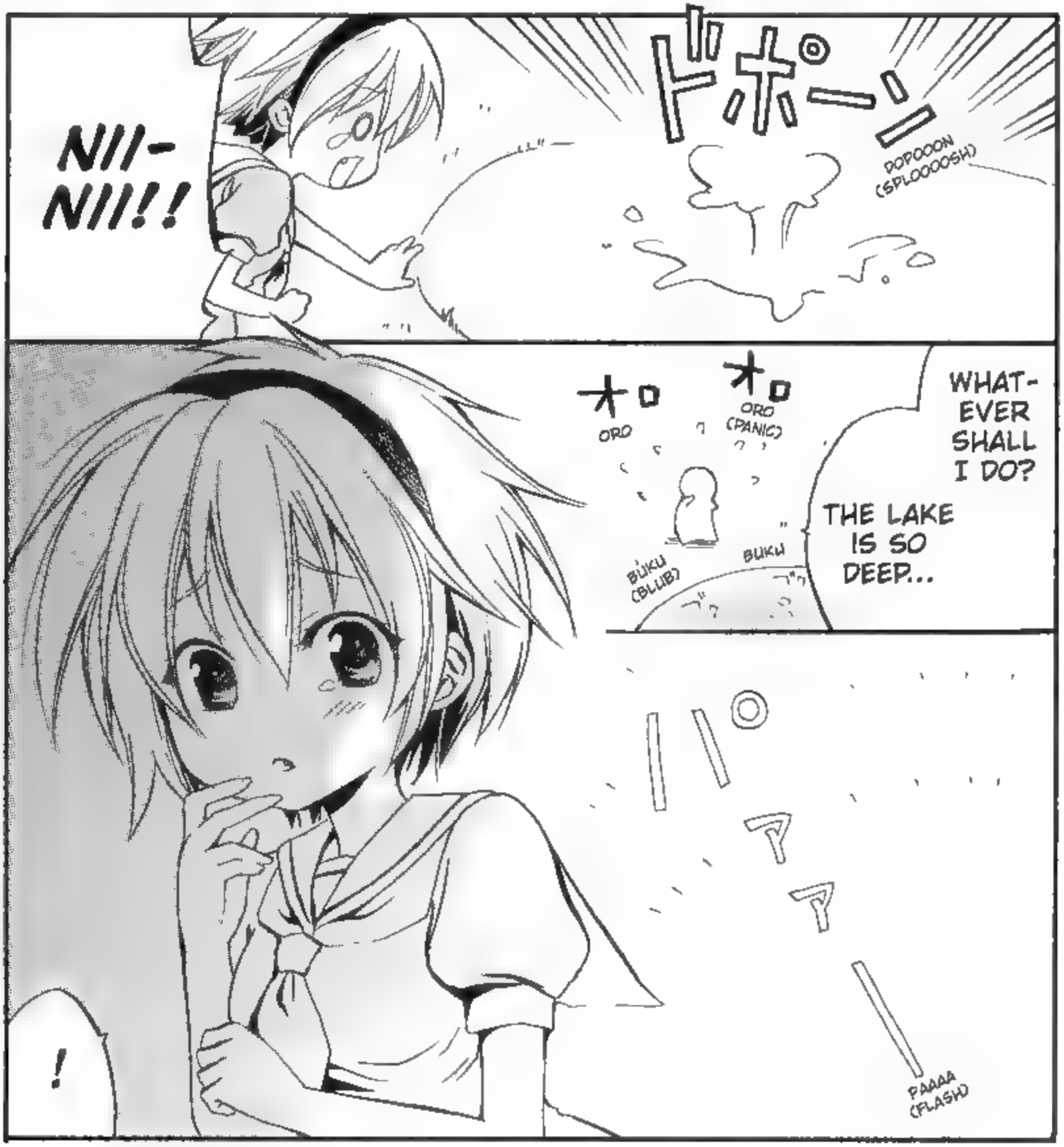
The story is now down to just the final "Festival Accompanying Arc." How will the battle end between Rika-chan and Takano? Please take a look at that piece of the story too.

Momoyama

P.S. Keiichi's dad and Chie-sensei are there with the villagers in the last chapter. I made it kind of like a Where's Waldo?, so please look for them!

TSURU (SLIP)
AH!


ONE DAY, SATOSHI AND SATOKO WENT OUT ON A WALK...


NII-NII!!
ドボーン
POPOOON (SPLOOOOSH)
ORO
ORO (PANIC)
BUKU (BLUB)
BUKU
WHAT-EVER SHALL I DO?
THE LAKE IS SO DEEP...
!
PAAAA (FLASH)

DID YOU DROP THIS GOLDEN TEPPEI, THIS SILVER IRRY, OR THIS REGULAR SATOSHI?

I AM MIYO, THE GODDESS OF THE LAKE.

I SEE YOU ARE VERY HONEST.

VERY WELL.

TH...THE REGULAR NII-NII!

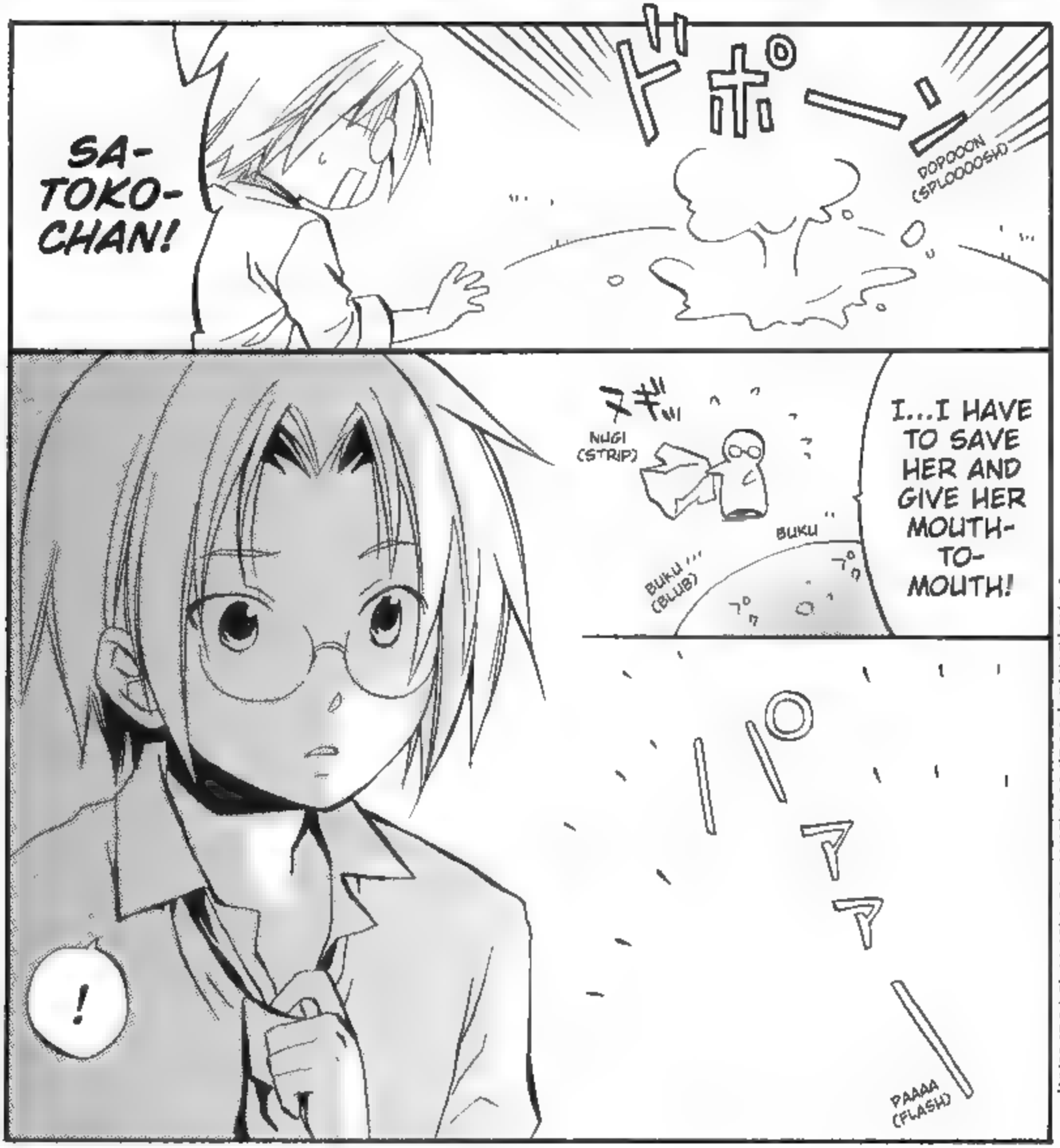
OF COURSE!

NO, THANK YOU !!!

NOOOOOO!

THEN AS A REWARD, YOU MAY HAVE ALL THREE!

SHE GAVE THE RIGHT ANSWER AND WAS PUNISHED ANYWAY. POOR THING.



↓ HAS ALREADY DECIDED MOUTH-TO-MOUTH IS NECESSARY

DID YOU DROP THE MAID SATOKO-CHAN, THE PRIESTESS SATOKO-CHAN, OR THE REGULAR SATOKO-CHAN?

I AM MIYO, THE GODDESS OF THE LAKE.

I SEE...

WELL, THEN...

KIRI (GLINT)

I DROPPED ALL OF THEM!

!!!

JUST A— WHAT ARE YOU DOING, TAKING ALL THREE OF THEM !!?

LIARS AREN'T ALLOWED TO TAKE THEM ALL HOME!

PYUUU (ZOOOOM)

THE LITTLE MATCH GIRL

I'VE HAD ENOUGH, SIR. I'M GOING TO LIGHT A MATCH.

SHA (SHHK)

NNNGH, NO ONE WILL BUY ANY.

AND IT'S SO COLD, SIR.

SHIN (CHILL)

SHIN

SHIN

ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A LITTLE GIRL WHO SOLD MATCHES.

GIRL. RIKA

HI, RIKA-CHAN.

AKASAKA!?

POU (GLOW)

A... ...AN-OTHER ONE!

SHA

AH!

FU (FFT)

WHAT'S THIS? RIKA-CHAN?

あは

MM-HMMM!

...PLEASE LET THE NEXT ONE BE AKASAKA.

しゃっ

SHA

FWOO!

AAAAH, THE WATER'S PERFECT.

I'M IN HEAVEN...!

POKA

POKA (WARM)

GOOOO (WHOOSH)

COLD

GULP (SWIG)

WARM

IN THE END, THE GIRL LEFT THE MATCH BUSINESS.

I'M DONE WITH THESE!

BAN (BAM)

GUSHI (GRIND) GUSHI

DAN (STOMP)

I AM GOING TO BE OYASHIRO-SAMA HERSELF.

AH-HA-HA-HA-HA! I DON'T THINK SO!

PUUU (PFFFT)

PAAAA (FLASH)

MUKA (IRK)

I WILL BE!!

THERE'S NO WAY! NO POSSIBLE WAY!

MOOON CHWOOMO

ALL RIGHT, THEN. HERE'S A POP QUIZ.
TAKANO...

!?
WHAT IS RIKA-CHAN'S BUST SIZE?

!!?
SATOKO!?

SHE...
...SHE'S A TRI-PLE-"A" CUP!!

YEAH, SHE'S RIGHT. SO?
I KNOW YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE KILLED, BUT YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE THAT HONEST, SIR...
ZUUUN (GLOOM)
TEARS
RIKA-CHAN. IS SHE RIGHT?

I'M SURE THEY'LL GROW.
WHAT?
RIKA.
FUWA (WSH)
IT'S ALL RIGHT, SIR.
POIN
POIN (BOING)
I'M GONNA DIE BEFORE THEY GET A CHANCE!
BIKU (JUMP)
KUWA (CRAWL)
ARE YOU PICKING A FIGHT WITH ME!!?

NIYAAA
ニャー
NIYAAA (LEER)
ニャー
!!
BIKU (JUMP)
ビク
MAJOR? WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

HO HO HO.

OH, YOU KNOW. I'M JUST SO EXPRESSIVE, SO I WAS RELAXING THE MUSCLES IN MY FACE.

OH...

...OHH, OKO-NOGI!

OH, I GET IT!

WELL, YOU ARE AT AN AGE WHEN YOU HAVE TO START WORRYING ABOUT LOOSE SKIN AND WRIN-KLES!

DO (BLAM)

DO

DO

DO

DO

THAT'S THE END! THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR READING!

HIGURASHI
WHEN THEY CRY
MASSACRE ARC ③

RYUKISHI07
Hinase Momoyama

Translation: Alethea Nibley and Athena Nibley

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This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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